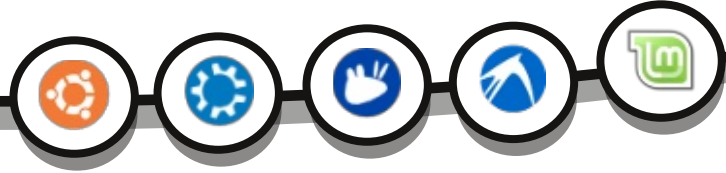




# Full Circle

THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE FOR THE UBUNTU LINUX COMMUNITY

ISSUE #75 - July 2013



## OUYA CONSOLE IS IT WORTH THE WAIT?

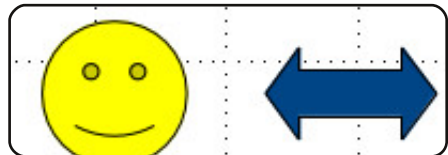


## HowTo



Python

p.08



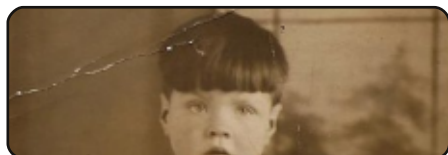
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### GOOGLE TASKS

```
[ ] This is a dateless, noteless task.
[ ] This task just has a date.
Due Date: Sat, May 19, 2012
```

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## Graphics



# Full Circle

THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE FOR THE UBUNTU LINUX COMMUNITY

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command more detailed
alias ls = "ls -la --
color=always --classify"
```

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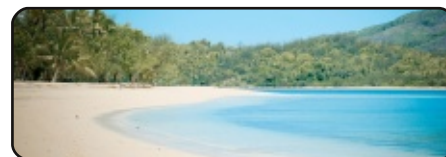
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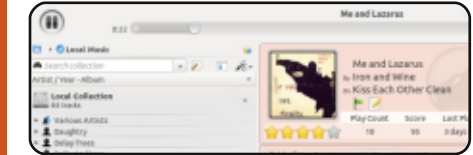
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## WELCOME TO ANOTHER ISSUE OF FULL CIRCLE!

The usual Python, LibreOffice and Inkscape HowTo's are here, but Nicholas has taken this month off. The email said something about him getting married. Sounds like a lame excuse to me. Replacing this month's Blender article is a short piece I wrote a little while ago on restoring old photographs using GIMP. My initial post on Google+ (using a different source photo) managed to get me on the 'What's Hot' list, so that's my claim to fame. We also have an interesting HowTo on mashing Google Tasks, the command line, and Conky. This results in task notifications via Conky. Very interesting.

Many thanks to all of you who stepped up and sent in your desktop screens. In honor of such bravery, I've tweaked the layout to give larger screens. While that may seem great, it doesn't leave much space for the text. We'll see how it goes and maybe next month I'll give it a 2.1 release.

Plenty for you gamers this month. I'm reviewing Euro Truck Simulation 2, and this month's Ask The New Guy is discussing Steam and the Ubuntu Software Centre. Speaking of games, please send in your game reviews. Once again, from dozens of writers, most have left and we're down to just one regular writer (Joe). Please, give generously!

Well, I shan't take up any more of your time. Keep sending in your articles and letters and enjoy the issue.

**All the best, and keep in touch!**

*Ronnie*

[ronnie@fullcirclemagazine.org](mailto:ronnie@fullcirclemagazine.org)



This magazine was created using :



## Full Circle Podcast

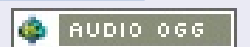
Released monthly, each episode covers all the latest Ubuntu news, opinions, reviews, interviews and listener feedback. The Side-Pod is a new addition, it's an extra (irregular) short-form podcast which is intended to be a branch of the main podcast. It's somewhere to put all the general technology and non-Ubuntu stuff that doesn't fit in the main podcast.

### Hosts:

- Les Pounder
- Tony Hughes
- Jon Chamberlain
- Oliver Clark



<http://fullcirclemagazine.org>



Download



## MIR PLANS IN 13.10

Jono Bacon announces that Mir, Ubuntu's new display server designed for fast, efficient, and extensible display across devices, is to be made default as XMir (an implementation of X on Mir) for users running open-source drivers in Ubuntu 13.10 along with Unity 7. He also mentions proprietary drivers will fall back to X in 13.10 but will get XMir support in 14.04 LTS, and he explains the decision is necessary to make Mir production-stable for 14.04 LTS. Bacon also answers users' possible questions. <http://fridge.ubuntu.com/2013/06/27/mir-plans-in-13-10/>

Various press outlets and blogs have covered this change. Here's a selected sampling from our editors:

- Mir To Ship As Default Display Server in Ubuntu 13.10 - <http://www.omgubuntu.co.uk/2013/06/mir-display-server-to-ship-default-in-ubuntu-13-10>
- Ubuntu to default to Mir stack in 13.10, Kubuntu will not follow - <http://www.zdnet.com/ubuntu-to-default-to-mir-stack-in-13-10->

[kubuntu-will-not-follow-7000017443/](http://kubuntu-will-not-follow-7000017443/)

- Mir, XMir and Unity 7 to land in Ubuntu 13.10 by default - <http://iloveubuntu.net/mir-xmir-and-unity-7-land-ubuntu-1310-default>
- Ubuntu 13.10 Saucy Salamander Switching To Mir Display Server By Default - <http://www.webupd8.org/2013/06/ubuntu-1310-saucy-salamander-switching.html>
- XMir will be Default in Ubuntu 13.10, Fallback X Session to be Removed from Ubuntu 14.04 LTS! - <http://www.techdrivein.com/2013/06/xmir-will-be-default-in-ubuntu-1310.html>
- Mir in Ubuntu 13.10, Benchmarking, and More - <http://www.jonobacon.org/2013/06/28/mir-in-ubuntu-13-10-benchmarking-and-more/>

## 13.10 (SAUCY SALAMANDER) ALPHA 1 RELEASED!

Kate Stewart announces the availability of the first Alpha release of Saucy Salamander from

Kubuntu, Lubuntu, UbuntuKylin, and Ubuntu GNOME. She points out that there have been some adjustments to the release schedules, lists the release details for Ubuntu flavors that have participated in the release, and provides links to the downloadable images. <http://fridge.ubuntu.com/2013/06/27/13-10-saucy-salamander-alpha-1-released/>

## SHARE YOUR INFRASTRUCTURE, WIN A PRIZE

Jorge O. Castro welcomes us to the Charm Championship and announces that there is "a total of USD \$30,000 in major prize money." He provides links to the competition rules and how to enter the competition. <http://www.jorgecastro.org/2013/07/01/share-your-infrastructure-win-a-prize/>

Also be sure to check out the related post at the Canonical Blog: "The Juju Charm Championship begins" <http://blog.canonical.com/2013/07/>

[/01/the-juju-charm-championship-begins/](http://01/the-juju-charm-championship-begins/)

## UBUNTU DEVELOPER SUMMIT: 27-29 AUGUST 2013

The Ubuntu Developer Summit will be taking place Tuesday, 27th Aug 2013 through Thursday, 29th Aug 2013 from 2pm UTC to 8pm UTC. As usual, the event is completely open and accessible to everyone at [summit.ubuntu.com](http://summit.ubuntu.com). <http://fridge.ubuntu.com/2013/07/11/ubuntu-developer-summit-27-29-august-2013/>

## MARK SHUTTLEWORTH: TWO WEEKS WITH MIR

Mark Shuttleworth writes about his experience using Mir for the past two weeks. He notes that the system feels smoother using Mir, and that X and Compiz appear to be using less memory and fewer CPU cycles than when X was directly handling the hardware. He then goes on to discuss competition, the importance of making the Mir decision, and



expresses his desire for other variants and distributions to consider Mir.

<http://www.markshuttleworth.com/archives/1269>

Also be sure to check out the the following other stories relating to Mark's blog post:

- Mark Shuttleworth after running Mir for two weeks: "I'm nonetheless surprised that the system feels smoother than it did pre-Mir" - <http://iloveubuntu.net/mark-shuttleworth-after-running-mir-two-weeks-i'm-nonetheless-surprised-system-feels-smoother-it-did>
- Mir For everyone - <http://www.jonobacon.org/2013/07/10/mir-for-everyone/>
- Mark Shuttleworth: 'Mir has delivered what we hoped' - <http://www.zdnet.com/mark-shuttleworth-mir-has-delivered-what-we-hoped-7000017897/>

## NOTICE OF SECURITY BREACH ON UBUNTU FORUMS SITE

Jane Silber writes that there has been a security breach on the Ubuntu Forums site, [ubuntuforums.org](http://ubuntuforums.org). She explains what has happened and says that

Canonical is working with software providers to address how the attackers were able to gain access. Jane also says Canonical has begun the process of notifying all users whose details were compromised by email and apologizes "for the breach and ensuing inconvenience."

<http://blog.canonical.com/2013/07/21/notice-of-security-breach-on-ubuntu-forums-site/>

The security breach is also covered in the following stories:-

- Ubuntu Forums Hacked, 1.8 Million Passwords, E-Mails & Usernames Stolen - <http://www.omgubuntu.co.uk/2013/07/ubuntu-forum-hacked-users-advised-to-change-passwords>
- Ubuntuforums hacked, "if you were using the same password as your Ubuntu Forums one on another service (such as email), you are strongly encouraged to change the password on the other service ASAP" - <http://iloveubuntu.net/ubuntuforums-hacked-if-you-were-using-same-password-your-ubuntu-forums-one-another-service-such>
- Ubuntu forums hacked; 1.82M logins, email addresses stolen - <http://www.zdnet.com/ubuntu-forums-hacked-1-82m-logins-email->

[addresses-stolen-7000018336/](http://www.theregister.co.uk/2013/07/21/ubuntu-forums-breached-18-passwords-pinched/)

- Ubuntu forums breached, 1.8m passwords pinched - <http://www.theregister.co.uk/2013/07/21/ubuntu-forums-breached-18-passwords-pinched/>

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS AND DEVELOPERS

Results from the Developer Membership Board Meeting 17 June 2013:

Approved as a Contributing Developer:

- **Louis Bouchard** (<https://launchpad.net/~louis-bouchard> | <https://wiki.ubuntu.com/LouisBouchard>)

At the the Developer Membership Board meeting 2013-07-01:

- MOTU Application and PPU upload rights for the Ubuntu Server packageset granted to **Robie Basak** - <https://wiki.ubuntu.com/RobieBasak/ServerDeveloperApplication>

The 12:00 Membership Board welcomed one new member on July 17th, 2013.

- **Elias Ps**

(<https://wiki.ubuntu.com/eliasps> | <https://launchpad.net/~eliasps>)

**Many Thanks to the Ubuntu News Team for their contribution this month.**

News this month comes from:

<https://wiki.ubuntu.com/UbuntuWeeklyNewsletter/Issue323>

<https://wiki.ubuntu.com/UbuntuWeeklyNewsletter/Issue324>

<https://wiki.ubuntu.com/UbuntuWeeklyNewsletter/Issue325>

<https://wiki.ubuntu.com/UbuntuWeeklyNewsletter/Issue326>





Last month, I started working my way through survey suggestions. However, to start with, I felt it prudent to move through the most common questions in a short-answer format. Starting this month, I will be devoting these articles to one or two topics from the survey results, beginning with setting default applications for programs, creating new MIME types, and assigning icons to said MIME types. For those of you wondering what MIME types are, they are the name given to the system for managing file types by extensions. For example, the MIME type for a text document (\*.txt) is text/plain. All MIME types consist of a type and a subtype (in the format type/subtype).

### DEFAULT PROGRAMS

The first spot to check for changing a default application is in System Settings -> Details -> Default Applications. Here you can set Web, Mail, Calendar, Music, Video and Photos application

defaults.

The second spot to check is the properties list of a file. You can right-click a file whose default you wish to change, and then head to the tab Properties/Open With. If you see the application you wish to use in the list, select it and hit the button "Set as Default". I will note – this is how it appears in Nautilus, and I'm not sure if the wording is the same in KDE/XFCE. If you can't find this option, or the application you want to use isn't listed, move on to the next step.

The last method I would suggest using is xdg-mime. It's a command-line tool to manage the XDG settings (xdg is the framework for dynamically choosing a program to load a file type – just try it by running xdg-open file). You could also edit .local/share/applications/default.list or /usr/share/applications/default.list manually – but I would recommend using xdg to make these changes, as it avoids duplicates and formatting issues.

The way you would go about checking a file's default application is as follows:

```
xdg-mime query default  
application/pdf
```

evince.desktop is the output telling you the default application. In this case, Evince

```
xdg-mime default kde-  
kpdf.desktop application/pdf
```

changes the default to KPDF.

```
xdg-mime query default  
application/pdf
```

kde-kpdf.desktop is the output in this case.

After this, running xdg-open on a pdf file should open it in KPDF instead of Evince. You must, of course, have installed the application first. If you're unsure what the desktop file is, you can run the following commands

```
sudo updatedb
```

updates the database for locate

```
locate *.desktop|grep  
application | more
```

will locate all the desktop files on your system, and search through them for your supplied application

If you're unsure what the MIME type is, you can run the following command:

```
xdg-mime query filetype file
```

Replace file with your actual file (including the path), and it will spit out the information you need for creating rules for that type. Keep in mind that for the web browser, you'll need to set the default for both x-scheme-handler/http and x-scheme-handler/https.

### MIME TYPES

Very, very occasionally you may stumble upon a file type that doesn't have a MIME type. If this is the case, you can make certain by running the following:

```
grep 'extension'  
/etc/mime.types
```

# COMMAND & CONQUER

If you don't get a result here, the extension (for example, txt for text files, py for python, etc.) isn't assigned to a type. To remedy that, you can edit the file using:

```
gksudo gedit /etc/mime.types
```

Once you've opened the file, add a new line at the end that reads:

**text/extension extension**

Replace the word "extension" with the extension of the file, minus the period. As I said earlier, this shouldn't be a regular occurrence – if it is, something is most likely wrong with your system.

## ADD AN ICON TO A MIME TYPE

If you want to assign a different icon to a MIME type (adding a different symbol for python files, for example), you can do the following:

- Find a suitable svg file (or make one)
- Name it text-extension.svg

(replace extension with the corresponding text from the mime.types file). Logically, of course, you can't use slashes in the file name (otherwise Linux will assume it's a subdirectory), hence the hyphen instead. It must also all be lowercase.

- Copy the file to /usr/share/icons/gnome/scalable/mimetypes with

```
sudo cp text-extension.svg  
/usr/share/icons/gnome/scalable/mimetypes/
```

- Log out and back in for changes to take effect.

For our Python example, the command would look like this:

```
sudo cp text-x-python.svg  
/usr/share/icons/gnome/scalable/mimetypes/
```

Before I wrap up this article, I wanted to mention that the Command-line Cookbook document I started on Google Drive (located here: <http://goo.gl/fp09r>) has gotten quite a bit of activity. It's currently at 2.5 pages of commands. I'm going to leave it open for editing for another month, after which I

Command-Line Cookbook ☆

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Table Help Last edit was made 3 days ago by anonymous

Normal text Courier New 11 B U A

- `sed` command. I use it every time I need to do several words replacements in files. For example, I had several Pink Floyd songs whose 'artist' tags had weird and different capitalizations, such as 'pink fLOYD', 'Pink floyd', 'pink FLOYD', which was annoying because my music player would list them as different artists. So I ran a `sed` command (inside a for loop) like `sed -s/[pP][fF][lL]/[iI][nN][kK]/[FF][LL][oo][yY][dD]/Pink Floyd/g` on all my Pink Floyd songs to do the hard work for me. I also use it very often when I need to change the format of a file to suit some software's format. It's an extremely powerful command, though not very easy to understand when performing more complex tasks, but it's really useful - and even fun :)
- `ls -e | grep` combination. I call this combination `ls_grep`, and I have an alias in my `bashrc` to account for that. I use it all the time I'm working at the terminal line when I want to look for something in my current directory.
- `convert` command. Whenever I scan a lot of documents and want to convert them in bulk to PDF and merging them at the same time, all I have to do is: `convert *.jpg output.pdf`.

create package list for information:  
`COLUMNS=200 dpkg-query -f='${Package} ${Version} ${Architecture}\n'`  
This list contains package names, versions and descriptions. Good to look up what's installed and what is done by which package. Alphabetical order.

create package list for restoring system:  
`dpkg --get-selections | awk '!/deinstall|purge|hold/' | xargs dpkg-query -f='${Package} ${Version} ${Architecture}\n'`  
This list only contains only package names of installed packages. One per line. Thus, it is

will begin to put it together. I'm currently thinking that I'll create a LaTeX document with the list, and stick it on github so that we can do our best to keep it up-to-date, as opposed to publishing it in a C&C style article. Let me know if you have any concerns with this (see the email address in the next paragraph). Also, if anyone wants me to document the process of creating the LaTeX document as a tutorial on using LaTeX, I'm more than happy to do so.

Hopefully this has successfully answered most questions you had

about assigning new defaults to files. If you have any questions, suggestions, or any other kind of feedback, feel free to email me at [lswest34@gmail.com](mailto:lswest34@gmail.com). If you do email me, please put 'C&C' or 'FCM' in the subject line, so it doesn't get lost.



**Lucas** has learned all he knows from repeatedly breaking his system, then having no other option but to discover how to fix it. You can email Lucas at: [lswest34@gmail.com](mailto:lswest34@gmail.com).



# HOW-TO

Written by Greg Walters

## Programming In Python - Part 45

This time, we are going to rework our database program from the previous few articles (parts 41, 42 and 43). Then, over the next few articles, we will use QT to create the user interface.

First, let's look at how the existing application works. Here's a gross overview:

- Create a connection to the database – which creates the database if needed.
- Create a cursor to the database.
- Create the table if it doesn't exist.
- Assign the video folder(s) to a variable.
- Walk through the folder(s) looking for video files.
- Get the filename, seriesname, season number, episode number.
- Check to see if the episode exists in the database.
- If it is not there, add it to the database with a "-1" as the TvRage ID.
- Then walk through the database getting show id and status if needed, and update database.

We will redesign the database

to include another table and modify the existing data table. First, we will create our new table called Series. It will hold all the information about the tv series we have on our system. The new table will include the following fields:

- Pkid
- Series Name
- TvRage Series ID
- Number of seasons
- Start Date
- Ended Flag
- Country of origin
- Status of the series (ended, current, etc)
- Classification (scripted, "reality", etc)
- Summary of the series plot
- Genres
- Runtime in minutes
- Network
- Day of the week it airs
- Time of day it airs
- Path to the series

We can use the existing MakeDataBase routine to create our new table. Before the existing code, add the code shown above right.

```
sql = 'CREATE TABLE IF NOT EXISTS Series (
      pkid INTEGER PRIMARY KEY AUTOINCREMENT,
      SeriesName TEXT,
      SeriesID TEXT,
      Seasons TEXT,
      StartDate TEXT,
      Ended TEXT,
      OriginCountry TEXT,
      Status TEXT,
      Classification TEXT,
      Summary TEXT,
      Genres TEXT,
      Runtime TEXT,
      Network TEXT,
      AirDay TEXT,
      AirTime TEXT,
      Path TEXT);'
cursor.execute(sql)
```

The SQL statement ("sql = ...") should be all on one line, but is broken out here for ease of your understanding. We'll leave the modification of the existing table for later.

Now we have to modify our WalkThePath routine to save the series name and path into the series table.

Replace the line that says

```
sqlquery = 'SELECT
count(pkid) as rowcount from
TvShows where Filename =
"%s";' % fl
```

with

```
sqlquery = 'SELECT
count(pkid) as rowcount from
series where seriesName =
"%s";' % showname
```

This (to refresh your memory) will check to see if we have already put the series into the table. Now find the two lines that say:

```
sql = 'INSERT INTO TvShows
(Series,RootPath,Filename,Season,Episode,tvrageid) VALUES
(?,?,?, ?, ?, ?)'
```

```
cursor.execute(sql, (showname,
root,fl,season,episode,-1))
```



and replace them with

```
sql = 'INSERT INTO Series
(SeriesName,Path,SeriesID)
VALUES (?, ?, ?)'
```

```
cursor.execute(sql, (showname,
root,-1))
```

This will insert the series name (showname), path to the series, and a "-1" as the TvRage id. We use the "-1" as a flag to know that we need the series information from TvRage.

Next we will rework the WalkTheDatabase routine to pull those series that we don't have any information for (SeriesID = -1) and update that record.

Change the query string from

```
sqlstring = "SELECT DISTINCT
series FROM TvShows WHERE
tvrageid = -1"
```

to

```
sqlstring = "SELECT
pkid, SeriesName FROM Series
WHERE SeriesID = -1"
```

This will create a result-set that we can then use to query TvRage for each series. Now find/replace the following two lines

```
seriesname = x[0]
searchname =
string.capwords(x[0], " ")
```

with

```
pkid = x[0]
seriesname = x[1]
searchname =
string.capwords(x[1], " ")
```

We will use the pkID for the update statement. Next we have to modify the call to the UpdateDatabase routine to include the pkid. Change the line

```
UpdateDatabase(seriesname, id)
```

to

```
UpdateDatabase(seriesname, id,
pkid)
```

and change the line

```
GetShowStatus(seriesname, id)
```

to

```
GetShowData(seriesname, id, pki
d)
```

Which will be a new routine we will create in a moment.

Next, change the definition of the UpdateDatabase routine from

```
def GetShowData(seriesname, id, pkid) :
    tr = TvRage()
    idcursor = connection.cursor()
    dict = tr.GetShowInfo(id)
```

:

```
seasons = dict['Seasons']
startdate = dict['StartDate']
ended = dict['Ended']
origincountry = dict['Country']
status = dict['Status']
classification = dict['Classification']
summary = dict['Summary']
```

```
def
UpdateDatabase(seriesname, id)
:
```

to

```
def
UpdateDatabase(seriesname, id,
pkid) :
```

Next, we need to change the query string from

```
sqlstring = 'UPDATE tvshows
SET tvrageid = ' + id + '
WHERE series = ' +
seriesname + ''
```

to

```
sqlstring = 'UPDATE Series
SET SeriesID = ' + id + '
WHERE pkID = %d' % pkid
```

Now we need to create the

GetShowData routine (top). We'll grab the information from TvRage and insert it into the Series table.

Just as a memory refresher, we are creating an instance of the TvRage routines and creating a dictionary that holds the information on our series. We will then create variables to hold the data for updating the table (above).

Remember that Genres come in as subelements and contain one or many genre listings. Luckily when we coded the TvRage routines, we created a string that holds all the genres, no matter how many are returned, so we can just use the genre string:

```
genres = dict['Genres']
```

```
runtime = dict['Runtime']  
network = dict['Network']  
airday = dict['Airday']  
airtime = dict['Airtime']
```

Finally, we create the query string to do the update (bottom). Again, this should all be on one line, but I've broken it up here to make it easy to understand.

The {number} portion (just to remind you) is similar to the "%s" formatting option. This creates our query string replacing the {number} with the actual data we want. Since we've already defined all of these fields as text, we want to use the double quotes to enclose the data being added.

And lastly, we write to the

```
try:  
    idcursor.execute(sqlstring)  
except:  
    print "Error Adding Series Information"
```

```
sqlstring = 'Update Series SET Seasons = "{0}", StartDate = "{1}", Ended = "{2}",  
OriginCountry = "{3}", Status = "{4}", Classification = "{5}",  
Summary = "{6}", Genres = "{7}", Runtime = "{8}", Network = "{9}",  
AirDay = "{10}", AirTime = "{11}"  
WHERE pkID = {12}'.format(seasons, startdate, ended,  
origincountry, status, classification, summary,  
genres, runtime, network, airday, airtime, pkid)
```

database (below).

That is all for this time. Next time, we'll continue as I laid out at the beginning of the article. Until next time, Enjoy.



**Greg Walters** is owner of RainyDay Solutions, LLC, a consulting company in Aurora, Colorado, and has been programming since 1972. He enjoys cooking, hiking, music, and spending time with his family. His website is [www.thedesignatedgeek.net](http://www.thedesignatedgeek.net).



The Ubuntu Podcast covers all the latest news and issues facing Ubuntu Linux users and Free Software fans in general. The show appeals to the newest user and the oldest coder. Our discussions cover the development of Ubuntu but aren't overly technical. We are lucky enough to have some great guests on the show, telling us first hand about the latest exciting developments they are working on, in a way that we can all understand! We also talk about the Ubuntu community and what it gets up to.

The show is presented by members of the UK's Ubuntu Linux community. Because it is covered by the Ubuntu Code of Conduct it is suitable for all.

The show is broadcast live every fortnight on a Tuesday evening (British time) and is available for download the following day.

[podcast.ubuntu-uk.org](http://podcast.ubuntu-uk.org)



# HOW-TO

Written by Elmer Perry

## LibreOffice Pt28: Draw Basic Objects

When I was a child, I enjoyed playing with building blocks. I didn't have the finely finished and polished blocks like you can buy for children these days. Instead, I had wood scraps from my father's woodworking. I ended up with a collection of various geometric shapes and sizes. These blocks became forts for my toy soldiers, roadways for my cars, and even a cityscape complete with airport. The only limit was my imagination.

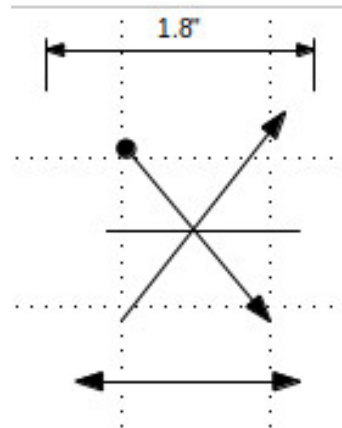
While my artistic skills never advanced much beyond 9th grade art class, I still enjoy putting things together and have always enjoyed geometry. My blocks taught me that most things can break down to basic geometric shapes like circles, rectangles, and other 2D geometric shapes. With these objects you can create, even if only rudimentary, anything.

At the heart of LibreOffice Draw are these basic geometric shapes. They allow you to draw almost anything, and the only limitation is your imagination. You will find all the basic objects on the Drawing toolbar. Starting with the

most basic of all drawing elements, the line, let's take a look at how to use the basic objects available to us in LibreOffice Draw.

### LINES AND ARROWS

The line is the second tool on the default Drawing toolbar, the first being the selection tool. To draw a line, click in the drawing area where you want to start your line and drag to the end point. If you look at the status bar while you draw your line, you will notice it tells you the size and angle of your line. To restrict the angle of your line to increments of 45 degrees (0, 45, 90, 135, 180, -135, -90, -45), hold down the Shift key while drawing your line.



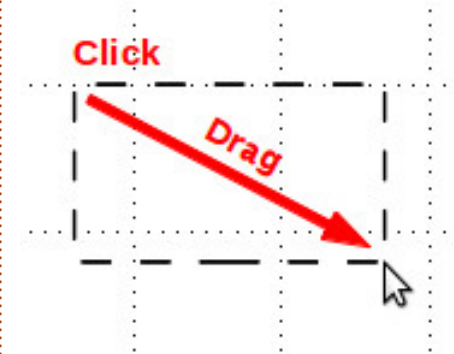
Sometimes, you need to draw your line from a center point rather than an end point. Hold down the Alt key while drawing your line, and the line will grow outward from the center point. You can hold down Alt and Shift together to draw a line from the center point and restrict the angle to increments of 45 degrees.

There is also an extended toolbar for lines on the Drawing toolbar. It allows you to draw lines with different arrows and start points. There is also a line for showing dimensions. You can use all the same methods for drawing a line with arrows that you use to draw an ordinary line.

Use the line and filling toolbar to change the line style and thickness, and to color your line. Make sure your line is selected when you make these changes. You can also select different arrow styles for your line using the arrows tool on the Line and Filling toolbar.

### RECTANGLES AND SQUARES

If you wanted, you could use the snap to grid function and the Shift key to draw four lines to create a rectangle or square, but Draw does provide you with an easier way to create them. The rectangle is the fourth tool on the default Drawing toolbar. With it you can create rectangles and squares.



To draw a rectangle, select the rectangle tool from the toolbar. Click where you want to place one corner, and drag to the location of the opposite corner. You make a square by holding down the Shift key while dragging. The shift key ensures the width and height are always the same.

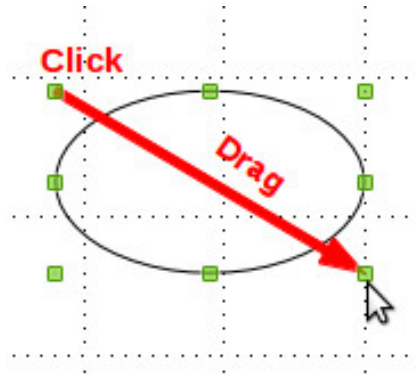


Just like the line, you will sometimes need to create a rectangle or square starting from the center point rather than a corner. Again, the Alt key causes the rectangle to expand from the center. Use the Shift-Alt combination to draw a square from the center out.

Rectangles and squares by default are drawn with the currently selected line and fill colors. You can change these using the Line and Fill toolbar. You can also use the color bar. Right-click for line color and left-click for the fill color. You can also control the thickness and style of the border line using the Line and Fill toolbar.

## ELLIPSES AND CIRCLES

The ellipse tool is the fifth tool on the default Drawing toolbar. Ellipses are drawn much in the same manner as for rectangles and squares. Basically, you are drawing a rectangle which will contain your ellipse or circle. Just like with the square, the Shift key lets you draw a circle. The Alt key is used to draw your ellipse from the center, and the Shift-Alt combination lets you draw a circle from the center.

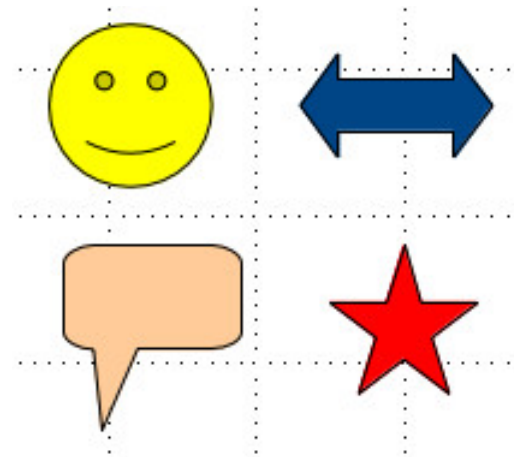


As with the rectangle and square, ellipses and circles are drawn with the currently selected line and fill colors. You can change them with the Line and Fill toolbar or the color bar. The Line and Fill toolbar also lets you change the border line style and thickness.

## SHAPES AND SYMBOLS EXTENDED TOOLBARS

Besides the lines extended toolbar, you have several other extended toolbars to choose from, including basic shapes (2D geometric objects), symbols (smiley face, moon, heart, etc), block arrows, flowchart symbols, callouts, and stars. These extended toolbars give you a broader set of objects for building your graphic.

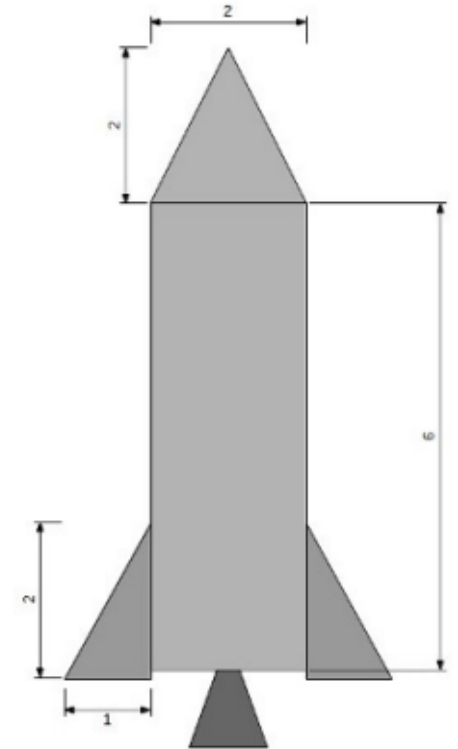
They are drawn in much the



same manner as rectangles, squares, ellipses, and circles. You draw a containing rectangle for the object. The Shift and Alt keys also work on most objects in the same way as with rectangles. You can use the Line and Fill toolbar to change the line thickness, line style, line color, and fill color of the object.

## SAMPLE DRAWING – A SIMPLE ROCKET

As I said in the beginning, I'm not much of an artist, but I do have a sense for putting shapes together to create an object, so let's walk through creating a very simple rocket image. Along the way I will introduce a few new tools and concepts for working with basic shapes.



First, we will set up a grid for our drawing, Tools > Options > LibreOffice Draw > Grid. Set the vertical and horizontal resolution to 1 inch. Set both subdivisions to 10. This will create a nice 1-inch box grid on our drawing surface. Check the snap-to-grid. This will help us get our objects to the right size.

Let's start with the nose cone. Select the isosceles triangle tool from the basic shapes extended toolbar. Draw the triangle, 2 grid squares by 2 grid squares, at the



top of the image. Make the line color black and the fill color gray 30%. For the body of the rocket, use a rectangle, 2 grid squares wide and 6 grid squares tall, line color black, and fill color gray 30%.

Let's add some stabilizing fins to our rocket. Select the right triangle from the basic shapes extended toolbar. Draw the right triangle at the bottom right of the rocket body, 2 grid squares tall and 1 grid square wide. Set the line color to black and the fill color to gray 40%. With the newly created fin selected, Edit > Copy, then Edit > Paste. The copy will appear over the top of the first fin. Drag and drop the copy to the left side of the rocket body. Right-click the copy and Flip > Horizontally. Move it to the lower left of the rocket body. With the copy still selected, down-arrow three times to move it just below the rocket body. Do the same with the right fin.

We will finish off our drawing with the engine nozzle. Create an isosceles triangle at the bottom center of the rocket body. Use your best judgment on the size. The top point of the triangle should overlap the bottom part of the rocket body. Make the line

color black and the fill color gray 60%. Make sure the nozzle is centered at the bottom of the body. Right-click the triangle and Arrange > Send to Back. This pushes the triangle behind the other objects so we can see only the bottom part.

There! You have a very simple drawing.

### CONCLUSION

The basic shapes are the building blocks for images in Draw. From them, you can create as simple or as complicated a drawing as you need for your documents. You can arrange your objects on the image to overlap each other and flip to change the horizontal or vertical orientation.

In my next How-To, I will show you how to create arcs, curves, and polygons in your images.



**Elmer Perry's** history of working, and programming, computers involves an Apple ][E, adding some Amiga, a generous helping of DOS and Windows, a dash of Unix, and blend well with Linux and Ubuntu.

## ANNOUNCEMENT FROM CANONICAL

### UBUNTU TOUCH SDK BETA

**T**oday we [Canonical] are announcing the **Ubuntu SDK Beta**. The SDK provides a set of APIs that includes the UI toolkit, enabling developers to create responsive and interactive applications with a native Ubuntu mobile UI. Qt Creator is an IDE with a visual interface for writing, testing and deploy applications; its API documentation and a developer site full of resources and tutorials make it easy to produce quality applications.

Together with a vibrant and ever-growing community of app developers, Ubuntu and the SDK provide the best ecosystem for your apps to thrive.

### GET STARTED - GUIDE TO INSTALLING THE SDK

To get started with the Ubuntu SDK, including easy installation instructions, tutorials and detailed API documentation, visit [developer.ubuntu.com/get-started](http://developer.ubuntu.com/get-started)

To help you design and build beautiful apps, the App Design Guides include everything you need to know about UX and visual design best practices. Find them at [design.ubuntu.com/apps](http://design.ubuntu.com/apps)

You can keep your development phone up-to-date with the latest build by following the instructions at [wiki.ubuntu.com/TouchInstallProcess](http://wiki.ubuntu.com/TouchInstallProcess)



# HOW-TO

Written by John Niendorf

# Google Tasks, The Command Line & Conky

## Programs needed:

Ajay Roopkalu's script Tasky:  
<https://github.com/jrupac/tasky>

Google API Client for Python:  
<https://code.google.com/p/google-api-python-client/>

Kaivalagi's Conky Text script which is part of his Conky Misc package:  
<https://launchpad.net/~conky-companions/+archive/ppa>

This howto assumes the reader is familiar with Conky. How to set up a working Conky could easily fill another howto. For advice on all things Conky, check out the Conky thread at the Ubuntu Forums:  
<http://ubuntuforums.org/showthread.php?t=281865&highlight=conky+screen>

I use both Google Calendar and Google Tasks a lot. I schedule all of my work events as well as personal events in the calendar and keep a list of things I need to do in the tasks.

## GOOGLE TASKS

```
[ ] This is a dateless, noteless task.
[ ] This task just has a date.
Due Date: Sat, May 18, 2013
[ ] This is an example task with a date and
Due Date: Sat, May 18, 2013
Notes: Send this to FullCircle
[ ] Finish Google Tasks HowTo
```

I prefer the command line over really big clunky applications. Why? One, I feel so cool using just a terminal; two, it seems as though command-line programs are just a lot more responsive than some of the larger programs.

So, after looking around, I found a lot of information about using Google Calendar in Linux. I settled on gcalcli because it gives me access to the calendar via the terminal. Once I had that, it was easy to pipe the calendar into Conky and have my schedule on my desktop.

Google Tasks, though, was another story. There isn't much out there for Google Tasks, at least not on the command line. (Maybe, I am one of the very few who use Google Tasks?)

**Step 1** – Download and install the Google API Client for Python

**Step 2** – Download and make executable the Tasky script

**Step 3** – Go to Google's API Console -  
<https://code.google.com/apis/console/>

**Step 3B** – Create a new project and switch on the service tasks

**Step 3C** – Once you fill out your project name and add your Google credentials, you should be given a client ID and a client secret. (You will need these.) They are listed under the heading **Client ID for installed applications**

**Step 4** – Once you have the ID and secret, launch Tasky. You should be asked to provide both of those. You may also need the API key which can be found under the heading **Key for browser apps (with referers)**

**Step 5** – You will see a url in your terminal and a place to enter a code. Follow the url and allow Tasky (the project you just created

at the API Console) access to your Google account. Once done, you will see an authorization code. Copy that code and paste it into your terminal (Ctrl+Shift+V).

**Step 6** – Depending on where you store the Tasky script, this may not be necessary. In my case, I have my script in a scripts folder. The keys.txt file that was generated when you granted authorization will be created in your home. I had to move the keys.txt file to my scripts folder in order to avoid having to authenticate each time I tried to run Tasky.

## ARE YOU STILL WITH ME?

Now, if you type Tasky, or, in my case, T, because I used a bash alias to shorten the command, then l (lower case L), you should see the tasks on all of your lists.

Since almost all of my tasks have a due date and a note, I use this script to streamline adding tasks:



# HOWTO - GOOGLE TASKS, COMMAND LINE & CONKY

```
This adds a task WITH a due date AND a NOTE.  
Subject:This is an example task with a date and note  
Due Date(MM/DD/YY):05/18/13  
Note:Send this to FullCircle
```

```
#!/bin/bash  
echo "This adds a task WITH a due date AND a NOTE."  
read -p Subject: sub  
read -p "Due Date(MM/DD/YY):" ddate  
read -p "Note:" note  
  
~/scripts/tasky a "$sub" -d "$ddate" -n "$note"
```

I put the date format reminder in because I always want to write DD/MM/YY, but don't know enough python to change the Tasky script. (I did try a search and replace and succeeded in breaking the script.)

Of course if you don't want a date or a note you can edit the script by either taking those lines out or writing an if-then statement. (I don't actually know how to write that if-then statement, but I'm sure it can be done.)

Now to put it into Conky so that it shows up on the desktop: Install Kaivalagi's Conky Misc package

You could pipe the list of tasks into Conky as it is, but that would look pretty ugly. The cool thing about Kaivalagi's Conky Text script is that it supports templates.

Below is the template I use for my Tasks Conky:

```
${font Ubuntu:size=10}${color  
6892C6};${color red};${color  
yellow};${color green}
```

```
#!/bin/bash  
/home/grouchygaijin/scripts/tasky 1 > ~/scripts/Text-Conky/tasks.txt  
cat ~/scripts/Text-Conky/tasks.txt | sed -e '1d' | sed -e 's/Notes:/Notes ;;Notes;:/' | sed -e 's/^ *[^ ]* //' | sed -e  
's/Date:;;Due Date:/' > ~/scripts/Text-Conky/tasks2.txt
```

To get my task list into a format that matches that template. I wrote a sed command and put it in a script (bottom).

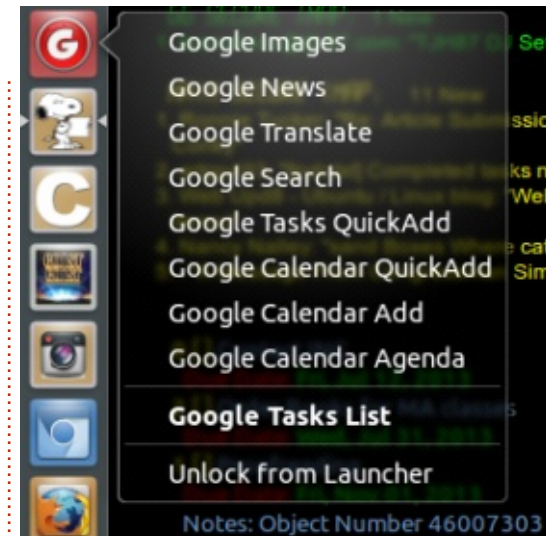
I have a cron job set to run this script every ten minutes.

I call the cleaned text file from Conky with:

```
${execpi 600 conkyText  
-textfile=/home/grouchygaijin/  
scripts/Text-  
Conky/tasks2.txt
```

```
--  
template=/home/grouchygaijin/  
scripts/Text-  
Conky/task.template}
```

There you have it. Google Tasks on your desktop in a visually pleasing manner, and it didn't cost a thing. I say that because one option I did see for Linux online wanted 12.95 USD for their skin-able program that will, among other things, display your tasks on your desktop.



**John** grew up in the United States, but has been living in Sweden since 2009. He has been using Ubuntu since 2008. John's other interest is music. You can visit his music site at [www.grouchygaijin.com](http://www.grouchygaijin.com)





# HOW-TO

Written by Ronnie Tucker

Don't worry Blender fans. Nicholas will be back next month. His excuse this month was something about getting married.

This month we'll look at restoring old and damaged photographs using GIMP. For this example I'm going to use a photo of my late grandfather as a child.



It's a very old photo taken in the early 1900's so the dark and light colors aren't as pronounced as they could be, but even fixing that won't repair the damage, but

GIMP will. Once we have the photo restored we can do some basic color correction to it.

## THE CLONE TOOL

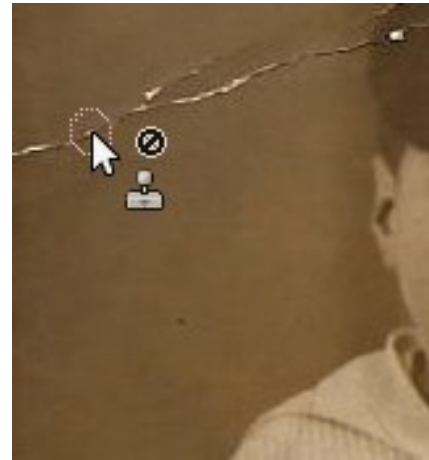


In the tool box, choose the Clone Tool icon (shown left). What this does is let you select a source within the image which it will clone to wherever you paint. Let's start easy and go with the crack to the left of his head. There are no details in/behind it, so it should be easy to repair. Here's the steps I take to repair it:

I select the clone tool then a suitable sized brush (with a soft edge) which has a diameter larger than the width of the crack. You'll notice that the pointer has a stamper icon beside it and a no entry icon. This is because I have not chosen a source yet, so the tool is not ready to use at the moment.

To choose a source, I hold down CTRL and left-click above the crack at the point where I want to start

# GIMP: Photo Restoration

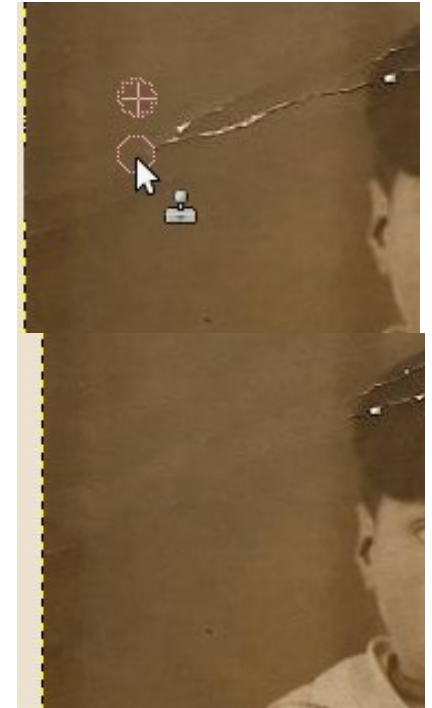


from. **Please note:** the source you choose has to match where you're going to clone it. If I chose a source above the middle of this crack then go from left to right it would not match.



With the source chosen I now

hold down the left mouse button and draw over the crack in one motion. If I stop-start, it will reset the source and not match where I am in the motion.



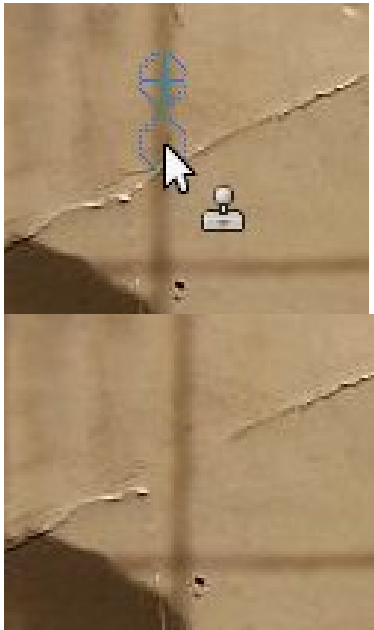
And that is the magic of the clone tool. You follow that procedure for each crack or blemish on the photo. The tricky part arises when you get to things like the vertical bar in the window backdrop; it must match, and it will





# HOWTO - GIMP: PHOTO RESTORATION

take a few tries before you get it; the source will need to be above/below where you're painting.



It'll take a bit of practice, but you'll get there in the end. Middle right what I have after a few minutes of Clone Tool action.

After I've removed all the cracks I apply some basic color correction (shown bottom right).

Obviously you remove all the blemishes then do your color correction, but I just wanted to give you a brief introduction to the power of the clone tool.



## PYTHON SPECIAL EDITIONS:



<http://fullcirclemagazine.org/issue-py01/>



<http://fullcirclemagazine.org/issue-py02/>



<http://fullcirclemagazine.org/python-special-edition-issue-three/>



<http://fullcirclemagazine.org/python-special-edition-volume-four/>



<http://fullcirclemagazine.org/python-special-edition-volume-five/>



<http://fullcirclemagazine.org/python-special-edition-volume-six/>



Although Inkscape is a vector graphics program, it does have some support for including bitmap images in your drawings. It's certainly not a fully fledged bitmap editor, and neither is it a desktop publishing program. If you want to airbrush a photo, you would be better off using The GIMP, and if you want to lay out a newsletter, then Scribus would be a better tool.



Getting an image into Inkscape is quite simple. My preference is to drag-and-drop it from the desktop or file manager into the main Inkscape window. Alternatively, you can use File > Import to pull your picture into an open document. File > Open will also do the job, but that will create a new Inkscape document with just the image in, and the document's page

size set to the dimensions of the image. Whichever approach you take, you will next be presented with an import dialog (left)).

If you select "Embed" then the image will be included as part of the Inkscape file. For the technically minded it is Base64 encoded, which is a means of representing binary data using text. Unfortunately, this encoding has been designed for robustness rather than efficiency, so will inflate the storage space required for your bitmap by about a third. The advantage, however, is that an embedded image is part of the SVG file, so if you move the document to another location, or even another machine, the bitmap will move with it.

Selecting "Link" will include the location of your bitmap in the SVG file, but not the data that makes up the image itself. If you subsequently move the SVG file, you'll need to move the bitmap with it, or fix the link to account for the change in location. One advantage of linking a file is that, if

you make changes to the original bitmap image, those changes will be automatically reflected in the Inkscape document. For an embedded bitmap you would have to remove the current version from the document and then embed the modified version.

Which option to choose depends on what you are doing with the bitmap in your Inkscape drawing. If it's only there temporarily—so that you can trace over it, or use it for reference—then linking is probably the best option. For use as a permanent part of your design, then embedding might be better – especially if you plan to move the Inkscape file, put it on a web server, or send it to someone else. If you're unsure, then I would suggest linking the image; you can always embed it later using the Extensions > Images > Embed Images... menu option.

Checking the "Don't ask again" box will mean that future imports will default to your choice of Embed or Link. I prefer to leave

this unchecked, as I tend to switch between the two options depending on what I'm drawing. If you do check this and then subsequently change your mind you can switch to the other option, or tell Inkscape to ask in future, via File > Inkscape Preferences... then selecting the Bitmap section and changing the "Bitmap import" option.

Having imported an image, it will appear in Inkscape with the normal selection handles. One thing that might surprise you is the size of the image—imported bitmaps tend to be bigger than you might expect. This is because Inkscape imports them at a resolution of 90dpi, regardless of the size, shape or embedded metadata of the image. At this resolution, a 900 pixel tall image will be 10 inches tall, nearly filling an A4 page.

Within Inkscape, it might be useful to think of your picture as being a group of colored squares—albeit a group that you can't enter or un-group. Each



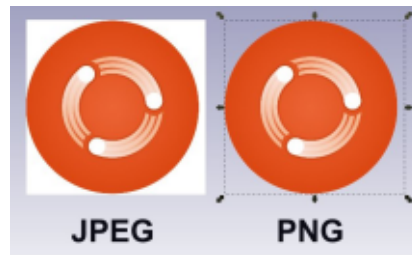
square is drawn at 1/90 of an inch in size, but you can scale it up or down using the selection handles, just as you would with any other object. Scaling like this doesn't change the number of rectangles in the group, it just changes the size and shape of each one. You can also skew and rotate the image, or change its opacity, just as you would with any other group of rectangles. Here's an example of an image made up of only 25 pixels, but copied, scaled and transformed to fill an A4 page. You can see that talking in terms of pixels and dpi quickly stops making sense when you've transformed your pixels into rotated rhomboids!

Sometimes, you don't want the

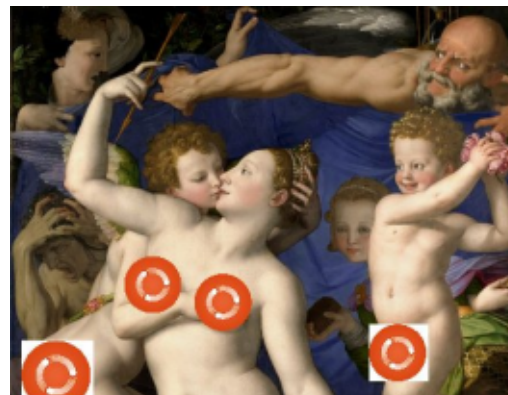


whole of a bitmap image in your drawing. If your image is a PNG file, then Inkscape will honor any

transparency that's present. This can be used to include non-rectangular elements into your drawing. Take the Full Circle Magazine logo as an example: you can clearly see the difference between using importing a JPEG version, which doesn't support transparency, compared with a PNG version, which does.



When protecting sensitive readers from the fleshy expanses of renaissance art, for example, a pair of PNGs makes for a reasonable brassiere, whereas JPEGs lead to overly obtrusive underpants...



Another way to show just a subsection of an image is to use clipping. This works in exactly the same way as clipping any other object—just draw a clip path on top, select both the path and the image, and then choose Set Clip from the context menu, or Object > Clip > Set from the main menu. Using this with the bottom left corner of our renaissance painting, followed by some rotating and flipping, leads to an image that should be familiar to anyone who has seen Monty Python's Flying Circus.



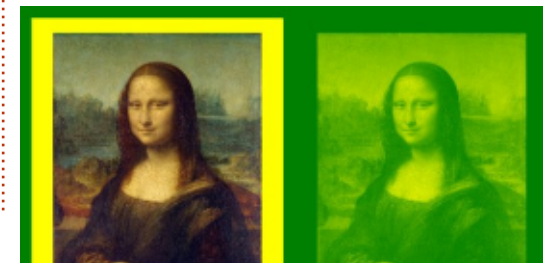
The hard edges of a clipped image don't suit every requirement, but, as you might expect, masking also works. A simple blurred shape with a white fill, used as a mask, lets you feather the edges of a bitmap image for a softer effect.



As you may recall from the previous part of this tutorial, masks are just collections of colored pixels—just like bitmap images. Inkscape will happily let you use an imported bitmap as a mask—it's really no different to using a group of rectangles. On first impressions it looks as though using an image as a mask results in something like a photographic negative:



What you're actually seeing is the white of the Inkscape canvas showing through the darker parts of the image, and the color of the masked object appearing where there are lighter parts in the image. By changing the masked object to a lighter color, and using a dark object as the background, relative normality is restored:

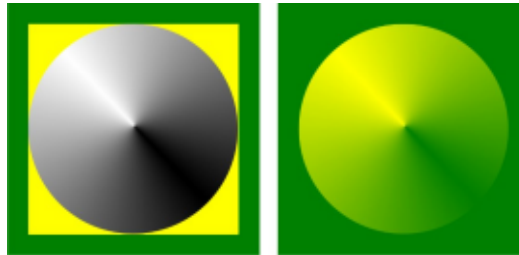


It's worth noting that you can mask any sort of object. The examples here all use an image to mask a single rectangle with a flat fill color, but you can use the same technique on an object with a gradient or pattern fill, or even on a group of objects.

Depending on your source image, you may find that you get better results if you convert it to a grayscale using a bitmap editor such as The GIMP. A bitmap editor will also give you the opportunity to lighten, or darken, or even invert, the colors of the image. If the image was included in Inkscape as a Link rather than an Embed, the effect of your changes will be applied to your Inkscape drawing each time you save the bitmap image in your editor, allowing you to easily experiment with different changes to the bitmap. In my experience Inkscape isn't always perfect at refreshing the screen when the bitmap changes, but scrolling the canvas a little, or changing the zoom level, usually fixes the issue.

Using bitmaps as masks can be another way to get around the limited types of gradients that the

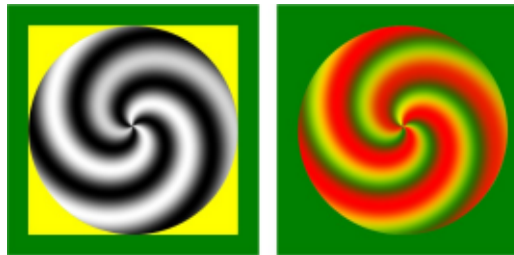
SVG format supports. For example, by creating a conical gradient in The GIMP, then using it to mask a yellow square on a green background, it's possible to produce a conical yellow-green gradient that would be difficult to create in Inkscape alone.



Of course this approach doesn't result in a genuine vector gradient, so the accuracy is determined by the resolution of your bitmap. You could get the same effect by simply creating a yellow-green conical gradient directly in The GIMP, and then importing it directly into Inkscape. By using the image as a mask, however, you can still freely change the colors within Inkscape, rather than having to modify the bitmap image each time.

A major limitation of this method is that you can affect the transparency of only one object at a time, so gradients with multiple color stops are a problem. You can

work around this by using your mask on a group of objects, or by layering several masked objects on top of each other, but that can quickly become complex. To demonstrate this approach, I've created a bitmap using the "Three Bars sin" gradient from The GIMP, drawn as a spiral gradient. I first applied this to the same yellow square on a green background as used previously, then duplicated it in-place (Edit > Duplicate, or Ctrl-D) before rotating it slightly to give a multi-colored spiral gradient.



As you can see, once a bitmap has been linked or embedded into an Inkscape document, you can pretty much treat it in the same manner as any other object. If you think of it simply as a group of colored rectangles then you won't go far wrong. Don't mistake Inkscape for a bitmap editor or a desktop publishing program, though—The GIMP or Scribus are far better tools for those tasks.

Next time, we'll continue our tour of bitmaps in Inkscape by finding out how to turn them into genuine vectors.

### Image Credits

"Venus, Cupid, Folly and Time" by Angelo Bronzino  
[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Angelo\\_Bronzino\\_001.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Angelo_Bronzino_001.jpg)

"La Gioconda" (aka "Mona Lisa") by Leonardo da Vinci  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mona\\_Lisa,\\_by\\_Leonardo\\_da\\_Vinci,\\_from\\_C2RMF\\_retouched.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mona_Lisa,_by_Leonardo_da_Vinci,_from_C2RMF_retouched.jpg)



**Mark's** Inkscape created webcomic, 'Monsters, Inked' is now available to buy as a book from <http://www.peppertop.com/shop/>





# HOW-TO

Written by Ronnie Tucker

# Write For Full Circle Magazine

## GUIDELINES

The single rule for an article is that **it must somehow be linked to Ubuntu or one of the many derivatives of Ubuntu (Kubuntu, Xubuntu, Lubuntu, etc).**

## RULES

• There is no word limit for articles, but be advised that long articles may be split across several issues.

• For advice, please refer to the **Official Full Circle Style Guide:**  
<http://url.fullcirclemagazine.org/75d471>

• Write your article in whichever software you choose, I would recommend LibreOffice, but most importantly - **PLEASE SPELL AND GRAMMAR CHECK IT!**

• In your article, please indicate where you would like a particular image to be placed by indicating the image name in a new paragraph or by embedding the image in the ODT (Open Office)

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• Images should be JPG, no wider than 800 pixels, and use low compression.

• Do not use tables or any type of **bold** or *italic* formatting.

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## REVIEWS

### GAMES/APPLICATIONS

When reviewing games/applications please state clearly:

- title of the game
- who makes the game
- is it free, or a paid download?
- where to get it from (give download/homepage URL)
- is it Linux native, or did you use Wine?
- your marks out of five
- a summary with positive and negative points

### HARDWARE

When reviewing hardware please state clearly:

- make and model of the hardware
- what category would you put this hardware into?
- any glitches that you may have had while using the hardware?
- easy to get the hardware working in Linux?
- did you have to use Windows drivers?
- marks out of five
- a summary with positive and negative points

**You don't need to be an expert to write an article - write about the games, applications and hardware that you use every day.**





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# ASK THE NEW GUY

Written by Copil Yáñez

If you have a simple question, and “Ubuntu Touch” sounds like what happens when you get too close to Mark Shuttleworth, contact me at [copil.yanez@gmail.com](mailto:copil.yanez@gmail.com).

Today’s question is:

**Q: With Ubuntu improving at such a heady pace, is Linux gaming keeping up?**

A: Yes. And to explain why I think so, let’s go back a bit. Say, a few millenia.

For tens of thousands of years, humans survived as hunter-gatherers, living a precarious existence balanced on the knife-edge between having just enough food to live and becoming the protein layer in a saber-toothed tiger’s australopithecine sandwich.

But then someone was all, hey, what the hell? There’s a perfectly good cave over there. It’s protected from the elements, has great airflow and valley views, and once we clear out the ten thousand bats living inside and sweep up a century of

accumulated guano, it would make a great little walkup with easy watering hole access. It’s got curb appeal! Let’s live there.

Thus was the cradle of civilization gentrified. And with gentrification came comfort. And with comfort came a desperate need to fill all those hours we used to spend hunting and gathering.

Modern video games are the inevitable outcome. Gaming is the sort of leisure activity that signals a transition from hunting/gathering to shabby-chic cave living.

If Linux appears to be leading from the rear with regards to gaming, it’s because Linux users didn’t always have as much time as their Windows-user counterparts. I mean, come on, Windows users had all sorts of time, hours upon hours of down-time they needed to fill. Pretty sure the Lascaux cave paintings were the work of an early Windows admin who drew them while waiting for a spinning hourglass to resolve.

Before my teasing goes too far, I have a confession: I’m a Windows gamer. I would sooner give up my own kidney than get rid of my 50th-level female Nord character in Skyrim. Her name is Sheila and she’s getting married to Lydia, her faithful companion. I like Skyrim because, in addition to wielding a two-handed battle sword and killing lizard-men, I get to live in an idealized world of progressive social politics where no one bats an eyelash when two females get married. It’s like Massachusetts. With dragons.

Knowledgeable users will point out that I can play Skyrim on Ubuntu using WINE or PlayOnLinux, Windows emulators that allow you to run Windows programs on your Linux machine. They might also suggest I run a virtual machine, basically a walled off part of my computer where Windows can run free like a panda at the zoo.

But none of these solutions are for the faint of heart or, like me, the stupid of brain. They require

tweaking user settings, downloading Internet Explorer, and, oooh, look, something shiny just distracted me because I’m SO BORED.

For Linux gaming to be competitive, it’s got to “just work.”

I’m going to argue that Linux gaming has arrived. At the very least it’s putting its tray table and seat back in the upright, locked position. Users like me can now download games from trusted sources and rely on the game to automagically adjust itself to optimal playable settings. I can start playing without looking up a single dependency or rolling back a single browser or glorpung a single foopsiwitz.

I came to this realization after a recent gaming bender where I went eighteen hours without food or sleep just so I could hand forge a silver wedding band for Lydia. In a matrimonial haze, full of love and tolerance, I thought I might have another look at Linux gaming.





The last time I did this, Valve had just announced its Steam video game distribution platform for Linux. And the Ubuntu Software Center seemed to be featuring slick-looking video games on its front page more often. I knew there were lots of games to play.

But what was the experience really like? I went looking for some free games to answer this question. I found three good candidates, all free or free-to-play (meaning, you can play the game, but advancement will eventually cost you something). Let's take a look.

The first two required the Steam client for Linux, available at <http://store.steampowered.com/>.

Steam isn't a game itself. It's software that allows you to download, play and backup games. It works on Mac, Windows and Linux (although not all games play on all platforms). There are lots and lots of games available on Steam for Linux, some of them familiar titles from other platforms (like Left 4 Dead 2 and Counter Strike).

The cool thing about Steam is that if the game says it plays on Linux (and your machine meets the minimum specs), it pretty much will. What's more, if you download a game and later reformat your hard drive or acquire another computer, you simply load your Steam profile and re-download your games.

Probably the best thing about Steam gaming on Linux is that it automatically adjusts the game settings to match your PC's specs. So if you're rocking a multi-core processor with discrete graphics card, the game will start with higher settings. If you're using a slower machine, you may not get all the eye candy, but you'll still be able to play. This is important for Ubuntu users because many of us turned to the OS because it keeps us from joining the "arms race," the desperate competition to own the most powerful computer on the block.

Once you set up your Steam profile, downloading a game is a point-and-click affair. It will cost you money to play most games but older titles are cheap or free, and there are usually demos available.

I downloaded two games from the Steam Store, both free.



### TEAM FORTRESS 2 Steam

Team Fortress 2 will be familiar to anyone who's played Unreal Tournament. Or, you know, Team Fortress 2 on another platform. Basically, it's teams of mercenaries on a strange planet fighting for control of a map. Or something. Whatever, it's a bunch of people fragging each other with plasma guns and rocket propelled grenades. This game has an online component that allows you to play with anonymous players on a server or set up your own game

that only you and your friends can access.

TF2 has been around since 2007. I mean, that was before Twitter, man! As such, the likelihood of the game looking dated is very high. So I was surprised at how well the graphics have held up. Seriously, unless you think every game should be as photorealistic as Skyrim, the gameplay and look of TF2 won't leave you wanting for anything.

Probably the biggest surprise for me was how fast the game played. I am running Ubuntu 13.04 on a three-year-old AMD-based machine. It's got a separate video





card, so I didn't expect the graphics to move like molasses on a cold day. But I also didn't expect the stutter-free gameplay I experienced. And I didn't need to tweak anything myself to get it. Steam automatically detected my setup and prepared the game for optimal play. Nice.

I had fun running around, blasting people with my gatling gun, and watching as my limbs flew apart whenever I was killed by another player. If you're into team-based first-person-shooters, check it out.

**Team Fortress 2 Verdict:** 8  
Severed Limbs out of 10



### AMNESIA: THE DARK DESCENT

Steam

Amnesia is a creepy horror game where you run around a dark castle, looking behind closed doors and basically acting like every horror movie victim you've ever seen. Hear that noise over there that sounds like the crusty nails of a long-dead woman? Yeah, let's go look there. I just needed someone

behind me yelling, "Call the police, you moron, there's a murderer behind that door!"

Amnesia came out in 2010 and there's a sequel in the works. The atmosphere is dark and the sound design is great. You're never quite sure what's around the next corner but looking is half the fun. The game even recommends you play it in a dark room with headphones on. I'm not sure I'm brave enough to try that, but I can see the appeal.

Again, the smooth gameplay and effortless set up was a pleasant surprise. This is why I say that we're really getting somewhere with Linux gaming. Never underestimate the power of,

"It just works!"

If you enjoy scary movies, check out the demo for Amnesia: The Dark Descent.

**Amnesia: The Dark Descent**  
**Verdict:** 7 Unholy Phantasms out of 10

For the final gaming test, I tried something from the Ubuntu Software Center. We all know how easy the USC is. It lists all the titles from trusted sources, offers free and paid software, and pulls in all the bits and pieces you need to run the software of your choice, without any effort on your part.

Is the Ubuntu Software Center the open source counterpart to

Steam?

### VENDETTA ONLINE

Ubuntu Software Center



My dream has always been to get a job as a planet-hopping space hippie. I'd bring my laser-lute and photon-harp, and jam with all the other smelly long hairs from around the galaxy. So, pretty much my life ported to an online game.

VO is a MMORPG, a Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game, set in space. You get to build a spaceship and fly around blasting enemies and acquiring resources, which you then use to upgrade your ship and weapons.



Rinse and repeat.

This game was originally released back in 2002, when dinosaurs still roamed the earth. Or at least AOL did, anyway. This might explain the rudimentary graphics.

But, once again, gameplay trumps just about everything else. Within a few minutes of loading the game and choosing my ship class, I was floating among asteroids, shooting at roving enemy ships and docking at space ports. All I needed was my laser-lute and I was good to go!

And the gameplay was super fast and stutter-free. Again, much of this has to do with the simpler game engine. But the fact that I can do this with an older computer, for free, without having to look up any tricks or tweaks to get it working, is pretty cool.

**Vendetta Online Verdict:** 6 Warp Drives out of 10

Three great games with absolutely no hassle to get running.

I honestly believe we've turned

a corner with Linux gaming. The Steam/Ubuntu Software Center model should work well for more complicated games (\*cough\* Skyrim \*cough\*). Those who need all the fancy graphics can shell out their hard earned cash for faster computers.

Those of us who just need a peaceful brook overlooking a quiet valley where we can have a romantic picnic with our life-partner (and the occasional dragon sighting) can play, too.

With such radical advancements in gaming, can there be any doubt that fragging cartoon avatars using face-melting pulse guns represents the peak of human evolution?

The answer is no, there cannot.

**Good luck and happy Ubuntuing!**



**Copil** is an Aztec name that roughly translates to "you need my heart for what again?" His love of women's shoes is chronicled at [yaconfidential.blogspot.com](http://yaconfidential.blogspot.com). You can also watch him embarrass himself on Twitter (@copil).

## LIBREOFFICE SPECIAL EDITIONS:

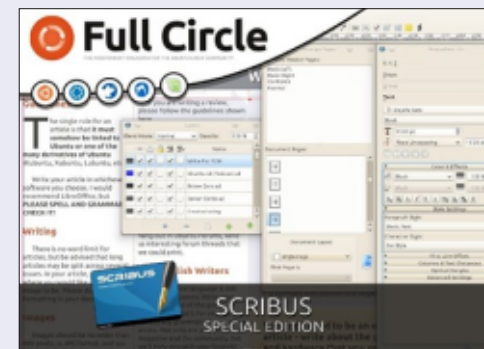


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Over the past couple of months I noticed our Internet connection appeared to be slowing down. Network games were okay, but downloads trudged along at around 100 kb/s, and our tablets and phones were having great difficulty watching streaming video. After a bit of help from our ISP, I narrowed the problem down to our router.

Having just returned from holiday, our budget was limited to under \$100. In the past I've owned routers by Netgear, Linksys, and D-Link, and, while our Linksys router served us well for a couple of years, our Netgear also worked very well. There were 10 routers that fit in that range up for consideration. Of those routers I excluded the D-Link routers because the couple I've owned in the past both ended up dropping wireless connections frequently after only a few months of use. Of the remaining routers, only the routers priced around \$100 had gigabit ports, and, since we already have a gigabit switch, I eliminated them. To judge the remaining

routers, I went online and looked at consumer ratings on several different sites. The router I chose, the Netgear N300, was also the second least expensive at \$39. While this wasn't a primary concern, it was a nice bonus.



Netgear makes at least a couple of routers under the banner N300 – the WNR2000 and the WNR3500L. The WNR3500L is a reasonably priced gigabit router sold on Amazon for \$60. This article covers the WNR2000 – a non-gigabit wireless N router. Had my local store carried the Amazon N300 router, I might have bought it, but I needed a router quickly.

## Netgear N300 Wireless Router

Opening the box I was surprised the first thing I saw was a printed copy of GPLv3 and GPLv2 license. This really isn't that surprising this day and age since a lot of routers use some form of \*NIX. The box came with a power cable, the WNR2000v3 router, and a short yellow ethernet cable.



Configuration turned out to be a bit of a pain, the router's "genie" software mis-detected our connection as a PPTP connection rather than a PPPoE connection. Having owned a couple of Netgear routers before, I knew they tend to use 10.0.0.1 instead of 192.168.0.1 as an address. Opening a terminal and typing ifconfig confirmed the router had assigned my notebook an address in the 10.0.0.x range. I corrected the router setup by going to the Basic > Internet tab,

selecting PPPoE from the Internet Service provider tab, and then entering my details.

The router interface is clean, but somewhat unresponsive, likely due to Netgear's "genie-ing" the web interface. According to this article on the OpenWRT website <http://wiki.openwrt.org/toh/netgear/wnr2000>, version 3 of the WNR2000 runs OpenWRT (version 1 and 2 do not). If this is true, Netgear has gussied it up to look like something else and stuck the genie moniker on it.

As I mentioned earlier the WNR2000 is a wireless N router, it bonds a couple of channels together to attain a theoretical maximum of 300 Mbps. The first real test was streaming video to our family tablet. I didn't hear any of the usual complaints about Internet speed from family, so the WNR2000 appeared to have at least fixed that problem.

Netgear also provides a free genie app for iOS and Android devices. I tried the genie app on

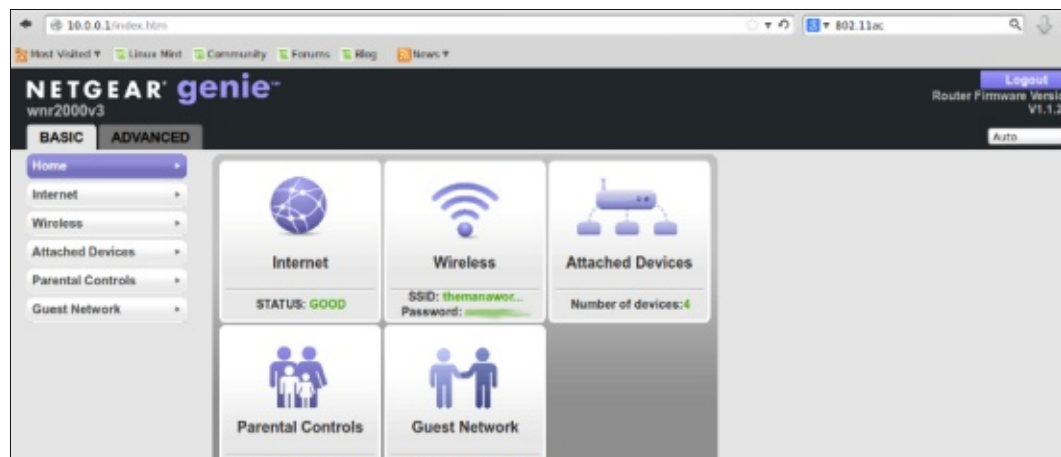




our tablet but was unsuccessful logging in to our router using the password I created or the default “password” password suggested by the app. Oddly enough, the My Media section of the genie app did work – allowing us to stream video from our XBMC machine to our tablet. If you own an iPad, you’ll appreciate this feature since, in my experience, most of the iOS upnp applications are crippled until purchase. Sadly, all of the genie apps except the upnp media app, and the QR barcode reader on the page after, wouldn’t work without logging in to the router.

As expected, the BASIC tab of the router is a really dumbed down interface that doesn’t allow a lot of control. The ADVANCED tab contains more of the options you’d expect on a router, Internet setup, wireless setup, LAN setup, Quality of Service rules, parental controls, site blocking, and more. One of the features I look for is the ability to set up DHCP reservations based on MAC address, a feature under the Advanced > Setup > LAN setup section.

The Advanced > Advanced Setup > Wireless Settings let you turn on and off the internal



wireless antenna both completely and by schedule, and create a wireless access list. The WNR2000 can also act as a wireless access point. This feature lets you run a cable from the standard ethernet port on a router to the WAN port on a WNR2000 and use it as the access point. The WNR2000 can also act as a wireless repeater, effectively boosting the wireless signal in a different room.

Port forwarding and triggering are also supported under the Advanced Setup section. I’ve used port forwarding in the past to open up ports and allow traffic to come through for a game server I ran.

Universal Plug and Play, UPnP, is enabled on a lot of routers by

default, I turned it off on the WNR2000v3. Having UPnP enabled is just begging to be hacked, and judging by the number of DoS attacks on high ports – 15 (one of which appears to be legitimate traffic) in 1 day, it’s a good thing I turned it off. Disabling UPnP does not prevent upnp devices on the local LAN from functioning correctly. Our iPad and Android phones were all able to correctly connect and stream to and from our XBMC media center with UPnP disabled on the router (this may have been why the iPad genie app refused to log in correctly, but I’d rather be safe and not use them than deal with a hacked server).

As I’ve hinted above, the WNR2000v3 keeps some logs. There isn’t a fancy graph of traffic

like on the tomato-hacked Linksys router we used to own, but you can set up the WNR2000v3 to send out email notifications of the logs, a handy feature to have if you’re away and want to monitor your router from your phone.

Netgear makes several routers in the N\*series, the top end using the new 802.11ac standard which operates on the less busy 5GHz band (the WNR2000v3 operates on the 2.4GHz band). At the higher end, the routers claim larger wireless coverage, better video streaming, and signal interference avoidance. With over 60 wireless signals available nearby, our N300 (WNR2000v3 model) has been performing well - though we’re covering only roughly 1000 square feet. The N300 isn’t the most feature-rich router on the market, but it’s a sight better than other routers I’ve tried, and at about half the cost of routers that have failed on us.



**Charles** is a step-father, husband, and Linux fan, who hosts a not-for-profit computer refurbishing project. He maintains a blog at: <http://www.charlesmccolm.com/>





I started with Ubuntu in 2005 on “Breezy Badger” 5.10. Until then, my wife and I had shared a home computer, but, when we bought a new computer, I decided to extend my horizons a bit and experiment on the old one. I had been exposed to SuSe at work but now I had read a bit about this new distribution of Linux called Ubuntu, and, being a good South African, was as much attracted by the name “Ubuntu” as by the idea of running Linux.

So I asked for the free disks from Canonical and installed them on the old computer, and have been hooked on Ubuntu Linux ever since. I have tried every version of Ubuntu, but, since 2010, I have stuck to the Long Term Support releases for my main machine and have loaded the intermediate releases on a test machine (which was originally the machine that I first used for Ubuntu until I bought yet another new machine last year and they all moved down a rank).

Why do I love Ubuntu? The reasons are long, and complex, and

not always logical. But, first of all, I buy in completely with the concept of Open Source software. I started in computers in 1966 as an assembly language programmer working on operating systems maintenance (and later, operating systems development), and in those days it was impossible to even conceive of the idea of not having access to the source code of all systems software. Then, slowly, software became big business, and source code became hidden from the customer. (I sometimes secretly wonder if that is not because the code is of such a low standard that the software companies are ashamed of it). It is not that I want to change the software; it is that I – illogically – want to know that I can if I want to!

And then, I don't like paying a lot of money for stuff that I don't use very often, and I don't like piracy. At the moment, Microsoft charges over R2000 for a copy of Microsoft Office. That is insane when LibreOffice costs nothing. Using Ubuntu, I have access to a whole world of free software that

covers nearly everything that I can possibly want to do with my computer. Best of all, I can try something, and, if it doesn't meet my requirements, I can throw it away at no cost except the time that I have used for the experiment.

I seem to have so much more control over what happens in Ubuntu than I ever had using Windows. (Actually, I still help lots of people with their Windows machines and am constantly annoyed when the system wants to do things its way rather than my way).

But I think that what I really love about Ubuntu is that the user community is so enthusiastic about helping people with their problems. Ask any question from the experts and, instead of being told to try Google, there will be three or four responses. I have never had a problem which the community has not been very helpful in trying to solve. (And, let's face it, some of my problems have been pretty infantile!)

The only problem that I have not been able to solve or work around is that I never managed to get my old Canon laser printer to work on Ubuntu. I am biased enough to think that this is Canon's fault and not Ubuntu's.

I switched to the Unity interface with 12.04 and like it a lot. I do have the problem, though, that Gimp does not run well under Unity, and so, being a heavy Gimp user, I have been forced to run Xubuntu as well as Ubuntu, and now I run both Xfce and Unity. Not really a problem, but I wish that the problem would get solved so that I could settle on a single interface.

I live in a large retirement resort in the South African country. I must confess that my attempts at evangelising Ubuntu have not been too successful. I have been much more successful in promoting the concept of Open Source software. (If anyone has a problem with Word, I immediately install LibreOffice for them!) Slowly, slowly ...



I started with Ubuntu 07.10 when a friend showed me a Knoppix Live-CD, and then I Googled about it, found Ubuntu and asked for a CD from Shiplt.

At this time I had an HP laptop with a 1.7 GHz Centrino Mobile processor and 768 DDR Ram. I dual booted it with XP and I loved Ubuntu. I didn't notice big performance gains but I loved the idea of open source software.

The only problem was that I couldn't connect Ubuntu to the Internet. I was then in Central Asia and had to connect to the Internet thru PPPoE protocol or something like that, and it was impossible to do it in Ubuntu, for me at least. So I had my laptop connected to a PC with XP thru a wired connection in order to have Internet on my laptop.

Also, there was a very powerful dictionary that didn't run in Wine, so eventually I used XP most of the time. However, I started to use open source software in XP whenever it was possible, so I

installed Thunderbird, Firefox, OpenOffice, etc.

Then I moved to another country in 2009 and bought my current laptop, an Asus K50ij from BestBuy. Ubuntu worked great but the webcam was upside down so I eventually stopped using Ubuntu and used Win7 a lot more. In time, the camera issue was fixed but not in Skype. I Googled a lot and found a transitory solution that fixed the issue, but I had to do it every time I logged into my session\*. So, again I eventually started to use Win7 because it didn't have that problem.

I wish I could fix that issue and use Ubuntu 12.04, which I really liked. I liked also Lubuntu and Bodhi Linux because I could see significant performance gains, but the issue in Skype appeared on those distros as well.

Right now I use only Win7 and I hope to have more luck when I buy another laptop. I don't think it will be in the near future because my laptop works great so far, and

laptops have become very expensive in my country. It's a pity because I don't use Russian a lot anymore and there are places like Wictionary and others that do the job very well. However, Skype is a must for me now. My friends don't use Google Talk, which could be a replacement for Skype, so it's Win7 for the moment but I am looking forward to going back to Ubuntu. Also, I don't like to dual boot.

\* **Gord notes:** This web page may have the solution:

<http://pc-freak.net/blog/how-to-fix-upside-down-inverted-web-camera-laptop-asus-k51ac-issue-on-ubuntu-linux-and-debian-gnu-linux/>

**But don't access it in Windows -- the site might contain malware.**

## Full Circle Podcast Episode 34, Raspberry Jamboree 2013

Your hosts:

- Les Pounder
- Tony Hughes
- Jon Chamberlain
- Oliver Clark  
and Freaky Clown



from the Blackpool (UK) LUG  
<http://blackpool.lug.org.uk>

Welcome to the first of a 2 part conference special, in this episode the presenters reflect on the first ever **Raspberry Jamboree** held at the Manchester Central Conference Centre on 9th March 2013

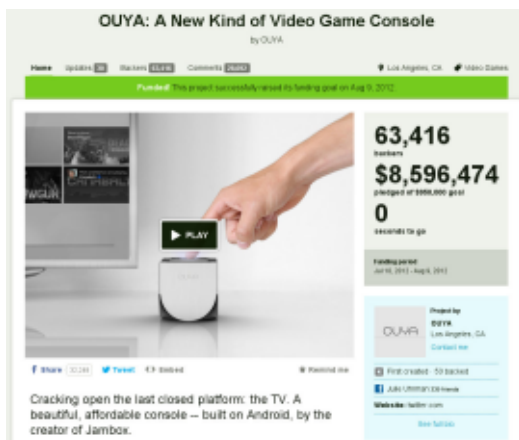
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# REVIEW

Written by Ronnie Tucker

It all began in July 2012 with a Kickstarter fund for the creation of the Ouya, an independent gaming console based on the Android operating system. They asked for nearly \$1m. In the end, they received almost \$9m with 63k backers. Impressive stuff. But is the final unit impressive?



## THE KIT

The Ouya itself is tiny. It's approximately 2.5" square (about the length of your index finger), has a round on/off button on the top, and can safely fit in the palm of your hand. On the back is an HDMI port, USB port, network socket, and a connector for the power supply. The controller is



wireless, has a small touchpad (above and between the d-pad and right stick), and is about the size of your average Playstation/Xbox controller, but not as heavy. It has the usual array of buttons (four), two sticks, one d-pad, and four shoulder buttons. Between the d-pad and right stick is the Ouya button.

Just for completeness, the Ouya comes with a modified Android OS which is listed on my box (as of July 2013) as:

Build Number: 1.0.328\_r1  
Software Version: 1.0.6  
Android: 4.1.2

## THE SETUP

First boot is a bit fiddly—it involves setting up your wireless, signing up to Ouya, then giving them your bank card details (for app purchases)—all done through the controller. Took a while, but I got there in the end. Pairing your controller to the console is easy enough. You just hold down the

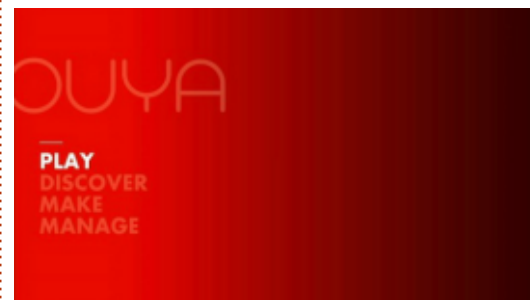
# OUYA Console

Ouya button (on the controller) until it flashes two lights (from the four at the top of the controller) at which point it's done and you can proceed.

My only reservation, thus far, was giving my bank card info to a screen that could very well have been insecure. Your browser will at least display https or a nice reassuring padlock symbol, but the Ouya just presents a pretty screen. At least try and assure me it's secure!

## PLAY TIME

With all the necessary digital paperwork done, you're presented with an orange screen displaying four options; play, discover, make, and manage.





# REVIEW - OUYA CONSOLE

**Play** - this lists your installed apps/games.

**Discover** - this is the Ouya store where you install/buy apps/games.

**Make** - this is more for devs, but is where side-loaded apps appear. More on that later.

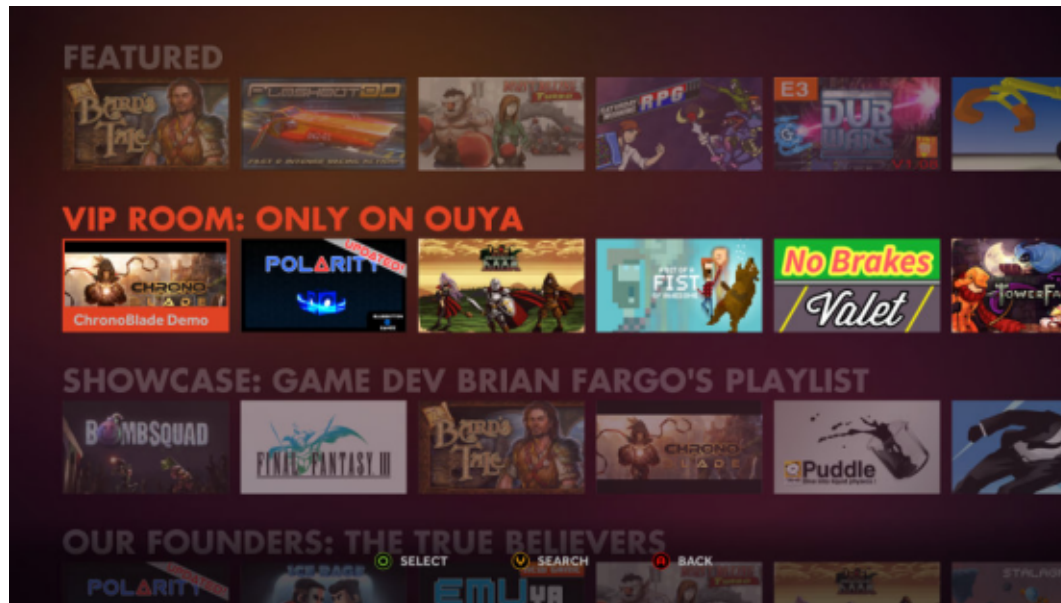
**Manage** - this is the Ouya settings screen.

First stop is 'discover' to install some games. Under discover, we're given categories such as featured, VIP (for games only on Ouya), several playlists (from developers I believe), showcase, trending, and genres. Searching is done using the yellow Y button.

Selecting a title takes you to its info screen with options such as download, rating, and more info.

Heading back to the main screen and clicking 'play', you're presented with the games you've installed. You can either click the icon to load it, or press the blue 'U' button to get info on the game to uninstall it if necessary.

From the main menu you can click 'make' to get access to a web browser (via the software option), or click 'builds' for developer stuff.



The 'manage' option (in the main menu) presents you with; account, controllers, network, notifications, and system.

**Account** - your Ouya account. Think of this as being your Google account in Android. In here, you can set parental controls and edit your payment settings.

**Controllers** - lets you re-pair or add new controllers. Up to four controllers can be added.

**Network** - lets you choose a wireless network from those detected.

**Notifications** - this where your system messages are.

**System** - this presents you with:

**Console Info** - displays system

software versions

**System updates** - checks for system updates.

**Advanced** - this is the equivalent of Android Settings and lets you turn on/off wireless, bluetooth, look at storage used, apps installed, and such-like.

**Factory Reset** - reset to factory settings.

All menu items are quickly displayed and there's no lag that I could see.

As of writing, there are only about 200 games for the Ouya so the range is quite limited. The only things to hold my attention were the emulators and the little crane

game. Others are interesting but are either terrible to look at (some classed as 'retro') or quite slow (I'm looking at you Amazing Frog). Thankfully, though, you can install Plex and TuneIn on the Ouya so even if you're not a gamer you can stream media to your TV using the Ouya.

## SIDE LOADING

Side loading is the process of installing apps/games using the Android APK file rather than the Ouya store. Initially it's fiddly, but the easiest way is to use the Ouya browser to install the Amazon appstore. Yes, you can install the Google Play store, but you'll have to hunt the internet to find an APK file as Google doesn't readily distribute it (even once I did get it installed it failed to run). Once the Amazon appstore is installed, you can browse (using the touch pad) through all their stuff too, but, and it's a big but, not everything will work on the Ouya even though it's Android. Things like Netflix work just fine, but take things like double taps to select items.

## CONCLUSION



## REVIEW - OUYA CONSOLE

Will it usurp Sony or Microsoft? Definitely not, but for about £99 (\$99), it's an Android game console (or media player) that you can plug into your HD TV. It's also still early days for the Ouya. It's a bit late in coming, but I'm sure (I hope!) it'll garner a great amount of developer/hacker interest. Build quality is a bit ropey, but for £99 you really can't expect much!

### PROS:

- it's small and cheap
- fairly powerful for such a small box
- already has emulators for SNES, Megadrive, C64, MSX, etc.
- can use the Amazon appstore for Netflix, etc.

### CONS:

- USB socket is a bit hit and miss. Wouldn't recognise my 8GB stick, but had no problem with my 1GB stick. Both were formatted as FAT32.
- quite a few reports of buttons sticking
- d-pad feels a bit cheap
- out of the box the range of games and apps is very limited



## UBUNTU FORUMS IS DOWN FOR MAINTENANCE



**There has been a security breach on the Ubuntu Forums.**

The Canonical IS team is working hard as we speak to restore normal operations. This page will be updated with progress reports.

### WHAT WE KNOW

Unfortunately the attackers have gotten every user's local username, password, and email address from the Ubuntu Forums database.

The passwords are not stored in plain text, they are stored as salted hashes. However, if you were using the same password as your Ubuntu Forums one on another service (such as email), you are strongly encouraged to change the password on the other service ASAP.

Ubuntu One, Launchpad and other Ubuntu/Canonical services are NOT affected by the breach.

### FINDING HELP

If you're looking for a place to discuss Ubuntu, in the meantime we encourage you to check out these sites:

<http://reddit.com/r/ubuntu>

<https://plus.google.com/communities/107299007624972266094>

<http://ubuntu-discourse.org/>



# SOFTWARE SHOWDOWN

Written by Tushar Bhargava

## The Musical Trio

Everybody loves listening to music. However, no one particularly likes managing their music collection. That's where music player applications come in. From organizing your music collection to automatically retrieving the album art, they make our lives much simpler. The most famous, of course, is the iconic iTunes. However, Linux has its own bevy of feature-filled music players, some with innovations that surpass their Mac and Windows counterparts. This article is the story of the three front runners, Linux's musical trio – Amarok, Banshee and Rhythmbox.

### SCRATCHING THE ITCH

According to a Wikipedia entry, Amarok was originally created by Mark Kretschmann to provide a better alternative to XMMS – a free music player that was popular during that time.

On December 15, 2004, Aaron Bockover made both an announcement and a confession in a seemingly innocuous blog post.

"I've never been 100% satisfied with the audio player selection in GNOME," he wrote and went on to announce a new project called 'Remix Player' which we know today as Banshee. He also listed his grievances with the current options and most readers concurred with his sentiments. Thus, Banshee was created, like most software projects, to scratch an itch.

So our entire musical trio came into being because their developers wanted something better. There may be several differences among them, but Amarok, Banshee and Rhythmbox

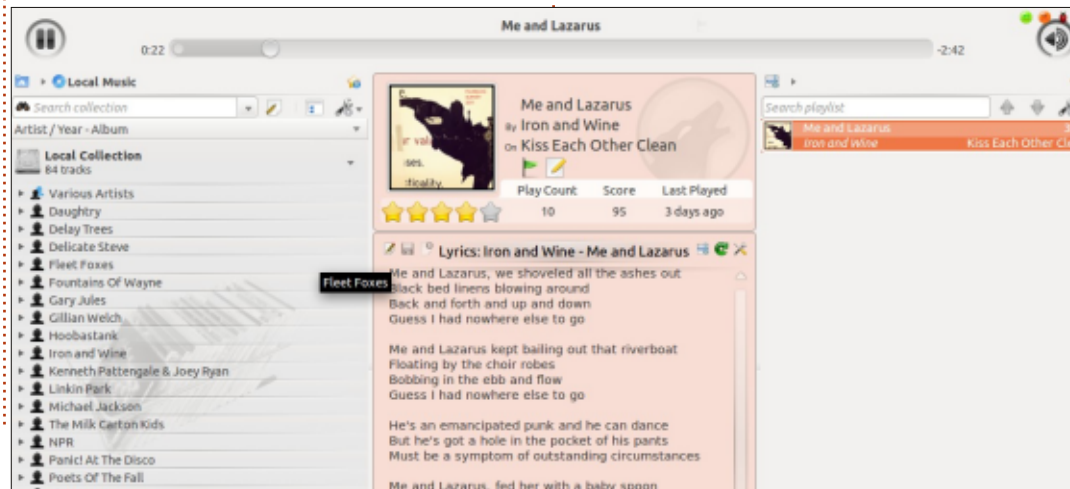
have similar origins.

### THE USER INTERFACE

As an Ubuntu user, I am curious to see KDE's offering – Amarok. However, I am in for a rude shock, an aesthetic outrage that is Amarok's User Interface (UI). The default UI has a business-like gray tone which is rather an eyesore. It's a 3-column UI – the first column acts as the content browser and has a search bar, the second is Amarok's jewel, the context browser (more about it later,) the last column is the playlist manager. The playback controls on the top are fairly straightforward – a large

pause/play button, a track progress bar, two arrow buttons pointing to the next and previous tracks and a circular volume dial. The 'shuffle' and 'repeat' button, however, are conspicuously (and most inconveniently) absent. To conclude, Amarok's UI, while certainly not beautiful, is still fairly usable.

Now to the GNOME contenders – Banshee and Rhythmbox. Banshee's UI is simple and elegant. It is a 2-column interface, with the second column being divided into 3 panes. The first column acts as a navigator, it shows the 'Libraries' for music, videos, audiobooks and podcasts, along with 'Online Media'. The second column shows album art in the form of square tiles. Not only does this make finding your favourite song effortless, but also makes Banshee the most beautiful music player application. Another pane allows you to choose the artist whose songs you wish to hear. The last pane displays the songs from the album you selected. Written down badly like this, the UI sounds





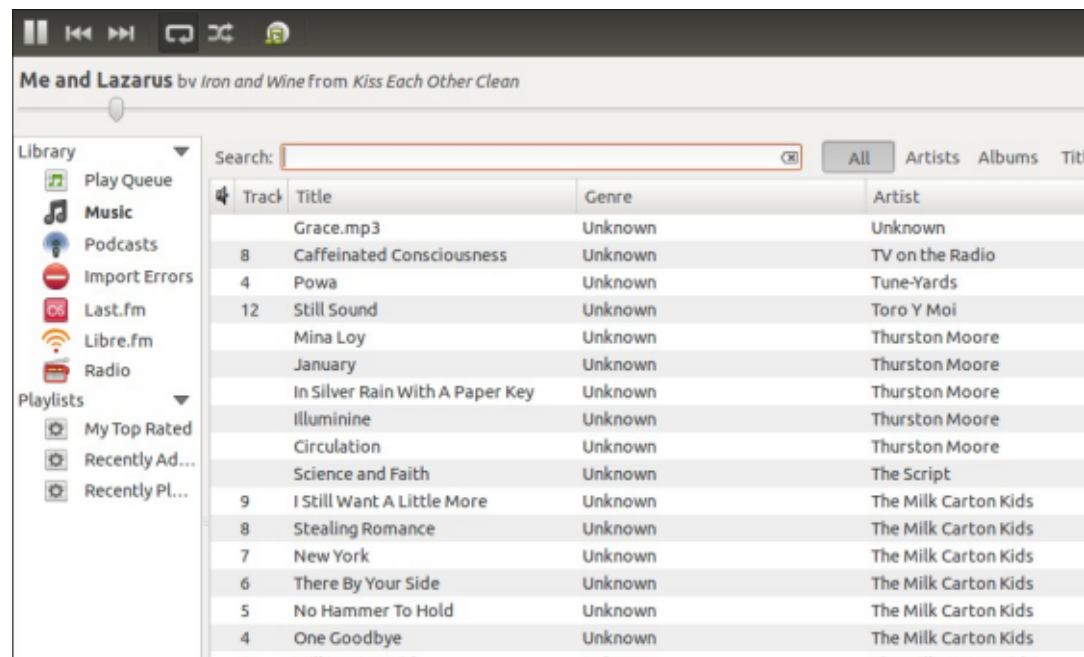


confusing but is actually extremely intuitive. The playback controls include a pause/play button, forward and back buttons for the next and previous song. A slide-down volume control, a search bar, a small but easy to use repeat button at the bottom, and a shuffle option integrated with the forward button cover all the basic features.

Rhythmbox has a nice, clean and perfectly understandable UI. It has a 2-column UI, very similar to Banshee. The main difference is that Rhythmbox places much less emphasis on the cover art. The

album art is relegated to a small corner at the bottom of the player. Rhythmbox, however, has the most comprehensive music playback controls of the trio – a play/pause button, forward and backward buttons, a repeat button, a shuffle button and an option to simplify the music browser visibility with just a single click. The icons are well designed and convey their purpose clearly. The aggregation of all the controls in a single place saves users time and puts the focus back on the music, extremely well thought out.

## INTERNET INTEGRATION



In the midst of the controversy over Napster and digital piracy, we often overlook an important fact: the Internet is a fount of free and legal audio in the form of podcasts and Internet Radio streams. A true 21st century music player should take advantage of this reality.

Amarok certainly taps into the power of the Internet. Choosing the 'Internet' option in the browser column reveals a variety of Internet music sources - a podcast directory, Librivox for public domain audiobooks (works like a charm), Magnatune, an online music store that believes in

'Fair Trade', the hastily named yet surprisingly good 'Cool Streams' – a collection of select radio streams that spans all genres, Jamendo.com – a digital platform for artists to showcase their creations, and, of course, the ubiquitous Last.fm – for recommendations and discovering new music, a central tenet of the Amarok philosophy.

Banshee also has an impressive list of built-in Internet applications: the Amazon MP3 store to buy music legally, the comprehensive 'Miro Guide' to help you find new podcasts (of particular note are the shows under 'Linux and Free



Software'), the Ubuntu One Music store, a great alternative for those who don't want to use Amazon's music store, the enormous Internet Archive, which has everything from movies to audiobooks to full concerts, all in the public domain. And finally, seamless Last.fm integration allows you to scrobble your tracks and receive recommendations from the comfort of Banshee itself.

Rhythmbox also offers some Internet integration features, though less than the others. Last.fm integration is present. The 'Radio' tab offers some Internet radio stations, again spanning several genres. An interesting inclusion is Libre.fm – a website that aims to provide a Free Software alternative to Last.fm. However, Rhythmbox lacks both a podcast directory and an online MP3 store. In terms of Internet integration it is definitely far behind the others and needs to catch up.

## ADDITIONAL NOTES, FEATURES AND MUSINGS

For all the talk of dehumanizing technology, I have yet to see a

software project that is not anthropomorphic in nature. Our musical trio is no exception. The three music players have their own unique features, philosophies and whims. In my brief yet searching acquaintance with them I stumbled upon a few.

Did you know Amarok, the big friendly wolf, craves human feedback? How do I know this, you counter? Well, under the 'Help' option in the menu, Amarok has two surprising options – 'Show Feedback Icons' and 'Send a comment to the developers'. Clicking on either gives you a chance to send your feedback to the developers, either in the form of a happy/sad emoticon or a fully fledged comment. More importantly, Amarok asks for your email address so that the developers can contact you back, an impressive commitment to improvement indeed. Amarok's feedback icons are an idea that should be picked up by all FOSS developers, it is a simple yet powerful step towards a better next version.

Apart from feedback, Amarok also has a philosophy: it aims to be your companion in your music

journey, rather than a mere tool. Amarok's powerful context browser shows you the lyrics of your current song, Wikipedia entries of the artist, album and song, even tabs for you to rock out on your own. Last.fm integration provides recommendations for new music you might like as does the 'Similar Artist' applet. 'Rediscover music' is definitely a philosophy well proved by Amarok, helping users find new music and learn more about the music they already have. Banshee and Rhythmbox have similar 'context panes' for lyrics and Wikipedia entries, but activating them requires some effort.

Banshee, meanwhile, has the annoying tendency of suddenly hanging when too great a demand is made of it. Euphemistically called 'memory issues', they interfere with an enjoyable listening experience. These need to be addressed soon lest Banshee become a distant memory in the minds of audiophiles. Being able to listen to music uninterrupted is of tantamount importance. In fact, Banshee's erratic performance was the reason I switched loyalties to Rhythmbox about three months back.

Banshee also has some skeletons in its closet, namely its reliance on Mono – an open source framework to allow Microsoft .NET to run on Linux. Critics fear that Microsoft can cripple Mono with patent suits which in turn will lead to an early demise for Banshee. In a sense these critics are the real banshees with their warnings of death. However, regular Banshee contributor David Nielsen ridiculed these fears and called them 'completely unfounded'. He argued that even Microsoft today deploys Mono. Banshee maintainer Bertrand Lorentz added, "If there are any patents they would be on specific ways to implement certain features, so any other media player with a similar feature would be as much at risk as Banshee." After sifting through the evidence, even I am of the opinion that we are being too alarmist in the case of Mono.

That leaves us with Rhythmbox, in which I see traces of an awed adolescent fan. Its idol? Apple's iTunes. The official project website, almost simpering, informs users that Rhythmbox is 'inspired' by iTunes. When I asked the entire community where Rhythmbox

# SOFTWARE SHOWDOWN

surpassed iTunes, I did not receive a single reply (at the time of writing). Of the three music players, Rhythmbox is probably the project that needs to innovate the most, a good UI can take it only so far.

## CONCLUSION

So which music player is the best? Objectively speaking it's Banshee. Not only is the UI beautiful and easily understandable, but also it is packed with features. The seamless Internet integration will be much appreciated by users. The only criticism I have is of the resources the program consumes and the frequent 'blackouts' when it hangs. However, if your computer is fairly modern, Banshee will probably hang less often.

I have to admit, though, I was very impressed by Amarok – its features, philosophy and the inbuilt feedback options. If Amarok acquires a beautiful UI to cloak its powerful music player features, and provides users the sorely needed 'shuffle' and 'repeat' buttons, it may well become the

undisputed king of music players.

Rhythmbox is the perfect choice for those who want to only listen to their music collection. It doesn't hang and has perfect playback controls. However, in terms of features and Internet integration it still lags far behind the other two.

### SUMMARY – AMAROK



#### The Good

- Powerful context browser that provides song lyrics, Wikipedia entries and more
  - Great Internet integration options
- Inbuilt feedback options ensure better next iterations
- Advanced playlist creation options
- Best album art retrieval

#### The Bad

- An ugly default UI
- Lack of 'shuffle' and 'repeat' buttons can be extremely frustrating
- Using the volume dial can be slightly inconvenient, sometimes even confusing

**Website:** <http://amarok.kde.org/>

### SUMMARY – BANSHEE



#### The Good

- Beautiful and intuitive UI with emphasis on album art
- Great Internet integration options
- Context pane works well and enhances the music listening experience
- Simple and comprehensive playback controls
- Stunning 'Now Playing' screen with a 'Simplify' button

#### The Bad

- Resource hungry program, hangs very frequently
- Certain features like the context pane require some effort to activate

**Website:** <http://banshee.fm/>

### SUMMARY – RHYTHMBOX



#### The Good

- Clean and simple UI

- Comprehensive playback controls aggregated in one place
- Libre.fm is an interesting Free Software inspired alternative to Last.fm
- One click 'Simplify' button allows you to quickly change the UI to fit your needs

#### The Bad

- Limited Internet integration
- Lack of features as compared to Banshee or Amarok
- Reliance on Last.fm for album art retrieval
- Album art is not displayed to its full advantage

**Website:**

<http://projects.gnome.org/rhythmbox/>

## THE WINNER OF THIS SOFTWARE SHOWDOWN IS

**Banshee.**



**Tushar** is a 17-year-old Indian who loves Ubuntu/FOSS. He programs in Java and C++, enjoys writing, and making Android apps. Email him at [tushar1995@gmail.com](mailto:tushar1995@gmail.com) with 'Software Showdown' in the subject.



# LETTERS

If you would like to submit a letter for publication, compliment or complaint, please email it to: [letters@fullcirclemagazine.org](mailto:letters@fullcirclemagazine.org). PLEASE NOTE: some letters may be edited for space.



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[linkedin.com/company/full-circle-magazine](https://linkedin.com/company/full-circle-magazine)



[ubuntuforums.org/forum-display.php?f=270](https://ubuntuforums.org/forum-display.php?f=270)

## VOICE COMMANDS

First, great job on FCM. I've been reading it right from the start, and, even though I've moved from Ubuntu to OpenSuse (thanks Unity!), I still find the articles useful.

Second, would it be possible to include an article on doing basic tasks in Linux (launch a program, bring a background window to focus, etc) using voice commands? I've been in IT for nearly 15 years now and the fingers are aging.

**Soumen**

Ronnie says: *The only thing I could find, after a quick Google, was **Palaver**. Needs compiling, but if you're interested here's a short tutorial (not ours) on how to install Palaver:*

<http://www.muktware.com/5412/how-get-palaver-speech-recognition-work-ubuntu>

*If you do install and use it, let us know what you think of it.*

## SOLYDK BACK OFFICE

In FCM#73, I took a good look at your survey. There was a question asking what people use Linux for, and I found that quite a few people use Linux in businesses.

I'm a business consultant by trade, and have a special interest in how people use Linux for their businesses.

A week ago I launched SolydK Back Office: a SolydK variant that supports the main business processes. A few professors are interested in using it in class for management students at their universities, but business users haven't contacted me yet.

Maybe you know of people with business interests, and would like to take a look at SolydK BO? You can find more information here: <http://solydtk.com/products/solydkbo>

**Schoelje**

## CLEMENTINE

I found the review of Clementine in FCM#74 interesting. However, the reviewer failed to mention one thing that makes it totally useless for me in that, unlike both Rhythmbox and Banshee, it will not play music from my network DLNA/iTunes server.

**Ian Pawson**

## FULL CIRCLE NEEDS You!



Without reader input **Full Circle** would be an empty PDF file (which I don't think many people would find particularly interesting). We are always looking for articles, reviews, anything! Even small things like letters and desktop screens help fill the magazine.

See the article **Writing for Full Circle** in this issue to read our basic guidelines.

Have a look at the last page of any issue to get the details of where to send your contributions.





# Tuxidermy

PENSADOR LOUCO

Ok, you gotta help me! Lots of zombies are breaking into my house!

Zombies, you say?

You don't understand, dude! They'll kill me! What do I do?

Sorry, man. There's nothing you can do to stop them.

What? I'm gonna die! You b[REDACTED]! why do I have to die?

Remember what I told you when you started with Ubuntu? Well...

FOSSSS!  
GOOD...



...Linux users have tastier brains, man.

DAMN...



## Q&A

Compiled by Gord Campbell

If you have Ubuntu-related questions, email them to: [questions@fullcirclemagazine.org](mailto:questions@fullcirclemagazine.org), and Gord will answer them in a future issue. Please include as much information as you can about your problem.

**Q** Every time I open the lid of my laptop, Ubuntu requires me to enter my password. How do I disable this?

**A** (Thanks to **ubudog** in the Ubuntu Forums) In System Settings, under Brightness and Lock, change the "Lock screen after" setting.

**Q** I have a folder in my home directory that I want to add to the "Places" sidebar.

**A** In Ubuntu 13.04, open the folder in the File Manager. At the top-right of the window there's a gear, click on it and choose Bookmark this Location.

**Q** I have a .deb from a trusted source. When I double-click on it, I see what is inside. How can I install it?

**A** Right-click on it and select "open with" GDebi.

**Q** I tried to install Ubuntu, and wound up wiping out my Windows system -- and all my priceless data. How can I recover?

**A** Stop using the computer immediately! You may be able to recover some of your data, maybe a lot of your data.

Remove the hard drive from the computer. If this is your only computer, buy another hard drive, install it, then install Ubuntu. If you don't already own a USB adapter for an external hard drive, buy one, (I've used a couple which cost less than \$10.) Install Testdisk and Photorec and read about how to use them. Select the one which seems most likely to be useful. Plug in your old hard drive as an external drive. Run your chosen data recovery package, and see what happens.

**Q** Will the Tesseract OCR program be faster than looking at an image and typing the text into a file?

**A** No, you will spend more time correcting Tesseract's output than if you just typed it in from scratch.

**Q** How can I set my keyboard permanently to Portuguese?

**A** (Thanks to **papibe** in the Ubuntu Forums) Open 'Keyboard Layout', add the Portuguese keyboard by pressing the + symbol, then move it to the top of the list or remove the other layouts.

**Q** I have done the latest updates on Xubuntu 12.04 and noticed it has not been asking me for my password to authenticate it?

**A** Yes, that's the new normal. See <http://goo.gl/DNlIX>

**Q** I modified an important file, and can't boot into the graphical system. When I boot into recovery mode, the filesystem is read-only. How can I fix the file I

messed up?

**A** (Thanks to **Cheesemill** in the Ubuntu Forums) In recovery mode, enter this command, which will let you edit the file:

```
mount -o rw,remount /
```

**Q** I have the "backports" repository activated in Mint 13, so I get the newest versions of Cinnamon. I understand the Mint team has forked Nautilus, but when I click on File Manager, I still get Nautilus.

**A** Open a terminal and enter this command: nemo

If you decide you want to make nemo your default file manager, go to this web page:

<http://www.fandigital.com/2013/01/set-nemo-default-file-manager-ubuntu.html>

As well, there is a file manager in the panel, which requires further work. Right-click on it and select "Edit". Change the Application





from nautilus to nemo, click on Update.

Also, there is a (nautilus) File Manager on the left side when you click on Menu. Simply drag it into, say Accessories. When you open Accessories, you might see an entry labelled Files, which you can drag to the left side of the Menu. You may want to edit menu entries, install Alacarte, which gets installed as "Main Menu".

**Q** I bought a USB turntable to convert my vinyl collection to computer files, but it doesn't work very well.

**A** Just bit-torrent download the tracks you legitimately own. I was capturing my favorite tracks, turntable to amp to line-in to Audacity. My son challenged me: "can you capture a track faster than I can bit-torrent it?" It wasn't close.

If you own a vinyl record, it is completely legal for you to download an MP3 of that record; it's called "backup." Mind you, I am not a lawyer, so I can't provide legal advice. My guru on copyright is Brad Templeton:

<http://www.templetons.com/brad/copymyths.html> (By complete coincidence, I have known Brad since he was in high school.)

The starting point is Google. For example, I own Art Garfunkel's Breakaway album, and one of the songs is "I only have eyes for you." So I Google "I only have eyes for you garfunkel torrent" and get several results. The second one takes me to a site where there's a download link for a "torrent" file. (Torrents are quite small, typically a few dozen KB.) In my file manager, I right-click on the torrent, and select "open with Transmission...." Transmission opens up, but we're not quite done. I need to select the file I want and then click on "open." If you're lucky, the MP3 will be on your system in a few minutes.

The system is not perfect. You will come across sites which want you to install a "download manager" (for Windows) and most of them are pure malware.

You will also see the terms "seeders" and "leechers." A seeder is a person who is offering a file, a leecher is downloading. If you want a file and there are no seeders, you

will never get it.

It's worthwhile to become familiar with bit torrent downloads, because on the day a new version of Ubuntu is released, by far the best way to get it is by bit torrent.

Clarification: the actual torrent I selected was for the entire Breakaway album -- and it downloaded in less time than it took to write this.

Note: music files aren't very big, a typical MP3 is less than 10 MB.

Second note: there's one possible legal glitch with bit torrents. As soon as you have some of the file downloaded, you become a "seeder," so you might be providing the file to people who do not have the legal right to possess it. That has the possibility of getting you into legal hot water.

**Q** I asked a question in the Forums, and got no response. How can I keep it active?

**A** Wait at least 24 hours, and Reply with the word "Bump." Even better, wait 36 hours, and you

will expose the question to people in a different set of time zones.

## FROM THE UBUNTU NEWS DIGEST, ACTIVE AND TOP QUESTIONS AT ASKUBUNTU:

\* What does ~\$ stand for?  
<http://goo.gl/BORVA>

\* What's the best way to SSH to machines on the local network?  
<http://goo.gl/4Zu3q>

\* How to take ownership over an existing Ubuntu Software Center app?  
<http://goo.gl/7xc7f>

\* Run a command with the argument from the last command  
<http://goo.gl/EhARr>

\* Ubuntu routing table with 3 NICs  
<http://goo.gl/m01fR>

\* May I speak with someone about these applications for a grant proposal I am writing?  
<http://goo.gl/LEmC1>

\* How to install multiple versions of LibreOffice?



<http://goo.gl/dUfZY>

\* Auto complete for often used command line commands?

<http://goo.gl/GkkHE>

\* Where can I order a CD of Ubuntu?

<http://goo.gl/yT9M0>

\* Differences between /bin, /sbin, /usr/bin, /usr/sbin, /usr/local/bin, /usr/local/sbin

<http://goo.gl/1eNld>

\* What is the difference between dpkg and aptitude/apt-get?

<http://goo.gl/zuZvD>

\* How often is the password asked for sudo commands? Where can I set it up?

<http://goo.gl/rGj4A>

\* Difference between "ppa-purge" and "add-apt-repository -r"?

<http://goo.gl/g7t0F>

\* Some fast way to save and restore tabs of Terminal?

<http://goo.gl/RJ6cS>

\* How do I show a message with username and date at login?

<http://goo.gl/Vq3Od>

\* Why can't I connect to wired Internet with fixed IP address

<http://goo.gl/mUVQv>

\* WiFi issue after installing laptop mode tools

<http://goo.gl/VtNU5>

\* Data on hard drive (erased by installing Ubuntu?)

<http://goo.gl/uW8Wl>

\* what is the difference between cd \ and cd / commands in Ubuntu terminal?

<http://goo.gl/B6Mxc>

\* Corrupted Windows 7 Registry, trying to install Ubuntu and delete Win7

<http://goo.gl/JT8X9>

\* Is there any program for writing a book?

<http://goo.gl/OGdWG>

\* I installed 64-bit OS in 32-bit Processor (or not...)

<http://goo.gl/nO1wx>

\* Total Newbie confused about partitions

<http://goo.gl/z12sM>

\* I want to know when a running process will terminate. How can I

watch it?

<http://goo.gl/UoprN>

\* Is it possible to use Python with the Ubuntu SDK?

<http://goo.gl/pY2le>

## TIPS AND TECHNIQUES Clean-up Time



Regular readers know that I track the temperatures of the various components of my computer like a hawk. I recently realized that my desktop was running warmer than when it was new, so it was clean-up time.

I keep my computer on a desk, sideways, with the monitor in front of it. Step one was to unplug everything, then move everything but the system unit out of the way. Then I could carry the system unit to my dining-room table where there was room to operate.

The family vacuum cleaner was on the agenda, using the "crevice" tool. Everything which looked like a vent was pretty much covered with a blanket of dust; the vacuum made short work of it. Don't forget USB ports, Firewire ports, audio

ports. My desktop has a front panel which pops off, with a filter behind it. I was surprised to see that the filter was pretty clean.

Take off the side panel. Surprise, there's hardly any crud inside the box. Physically remove the video card from the computer. My video card has a fan and a heat-sink with fins. Tiny dust bunnies were living in the fins. A Q-tip cleaned them out. Put the video card back, restore the side panel, put everything back where it was.

Did it work? I was surprised by how well it worked. Measuring everything at idle, the temperature of the hard drive dropped by a full six degrees C. The video card? Twelve degrees. The CPU didn't drop by much, but I can see a big difference when it's running flat-out. Time well spent!



After a long career in the computer industry, including a stint as editor of Computing Canada and Computer Dealer News, **Gord** is now more-or-less retired.



While driving a large behemoth of a truck through some long, winding roads throughout Europe may seem dull and boring, it's actually quite addictive! And hypnotic -- but with a touch of road rage thrown in for good measure.

### INSTALLING

Euro Truck Simulator 2 (ETS2) for Linux is installed via Steam. You purchase the Windows game through Steam as you normally would and let it install. Once the Windows version is purchased and installed you need to go to Steam > Library and right-click on Euro Truck Simulator 2 and choose Properties. In the window that pops up, click the Betas tab. Now you'll see a list of available betas. As of writing (July 2013), you should choose linux\_testing. This will install the Linux launcher and let you launch ETS2 using Steam.

### TRUCKIN'

The idea behind the game is

two-fold. You can either stay as a driver for hire – doing odd jobs for other companies – or (and more likely), you form your own company and accept jobs. With that, though, come responsibilities such as having to get a bank loan to buy a truck, paying off that loan, having to repair your truck from your own savings, and taking the blame when you damage the goods.

Once your company is on its legs, you can upgrade your base and hire other drivers to help your cash flow. Of course, this means more bank loans, buying more

trucks, paying for their damages, lateness and so on. No easy task!

While sitting in your truck, you can check a map of Europe and see all the jobs available. You can filter them by locations, distance, money, and so on. From within your warm cabin, you have access to GPS data (showing you your route), job info, a button to request help (ie: you've tipped the truck and can't move), and several other pieces of info. All of which come in handy at some point. You also have to remember to keep an eye on your fuel level and your

alertness. As you drive around, your sleepiness icon will start to fill up. If this reaches red then you'll be warned to pull over (in a designated area, not just anywhere!), and sleep. If not, you'll be continually fined until you do sleep. Seems simple enough, but if you're job requires you to be there in three hours (in game time), and you forgot to take a nap beforehand, then you could be forced to take a rest and turn up at your destination late. Not good.

Anyway, that's the basics of the game. Take jobs, deliver stuff, don't crash. There is more to it such as upgrading trucks, adding beacons, and what have you.

### GRAPHICS

The visuals for ETS2 are absolutely stunning. Out of the blue, the skies will darken and it'll chuck it down. The droplets of rain hit your windscreen and smear as you tear down the road. Don't worry though, you have windscreen wipers. If it's dark, you must turn on your lights, of course,





and your lights illuminate the road ahead giving a glow to anything white and lighting up traffic cones and the like. On a sunny day, you'll see the sunbeams stream through the trees casting shadows on the road. I usually end up veering all over the road because I'm too busy looking at the scenery.

The physics behind the game are also excellent. Using external camera views lets you see every suspension bump of your truck. AI is also good, sometimes too good, as at times the other drivers really do act like human drivers by overtaking at dangerous times, blocking the road... you get the idea.

Obviously the makers can't replicate the whole of Europe in a game, but they have included recognisable landmarks from most cities in the game. Which is a nice touch.

## CONCLUSION

I was wary of buying ETS2, but I'm really glad I did. It's a great game for just dipping into when you feel like it. Fire it up, take a job, maybe take another. I love that

aspect of it. The one big downside to ETS2, though, is the lack of a Linux demo to try out your hardware. You have to use Steam to buy ETS2, then, once you've bought it, you can download the Linux client to start it up. No demo is the one thing that almost swayed me away from ETS2 and is something the makers should rectify, as I'm sure it puts a lot of people off.

I like the idea that you're not on rails either. Many times I've not been paying attention, missed a turn off, and had to drive for miles before I could find a place to do a highly illegal u-turn to get back on track. While you are expected to

follow some laws, whether you decide to indicate is entirely up to you. Same with you deciding to mount the pavement to skip queues -- not that I'd ever do such a thing. Arriving at your destination, it's up to you whether you want to try and park the truck (much harder than it looks) or just skip it.

Time in the game is not real-time. When a job says it'll take 16 hours including a cross channel ferry, don't panic! It will certainly take an hour of your time to do, say, an 8-hour job, but it's always eventful. Especially since the game/GPS seems to love taking me down some small twisty roads

when it's dark and I have a wide load.

Yes, it does sound like the most boring game in the world, but I definitely recommend it.

### PROS:

- Amazing graphics if your machine can handle it.
- Many different ways to drive your truck (I use keys to drive and the mouse to look).
- Dozens of cities to visit.
- Doesn't keep you on rails.

### CONS:

- No Linux demo.
- Takes a hefty machine to play.
- No in-cab radio/music due to MP3 licensing issues.

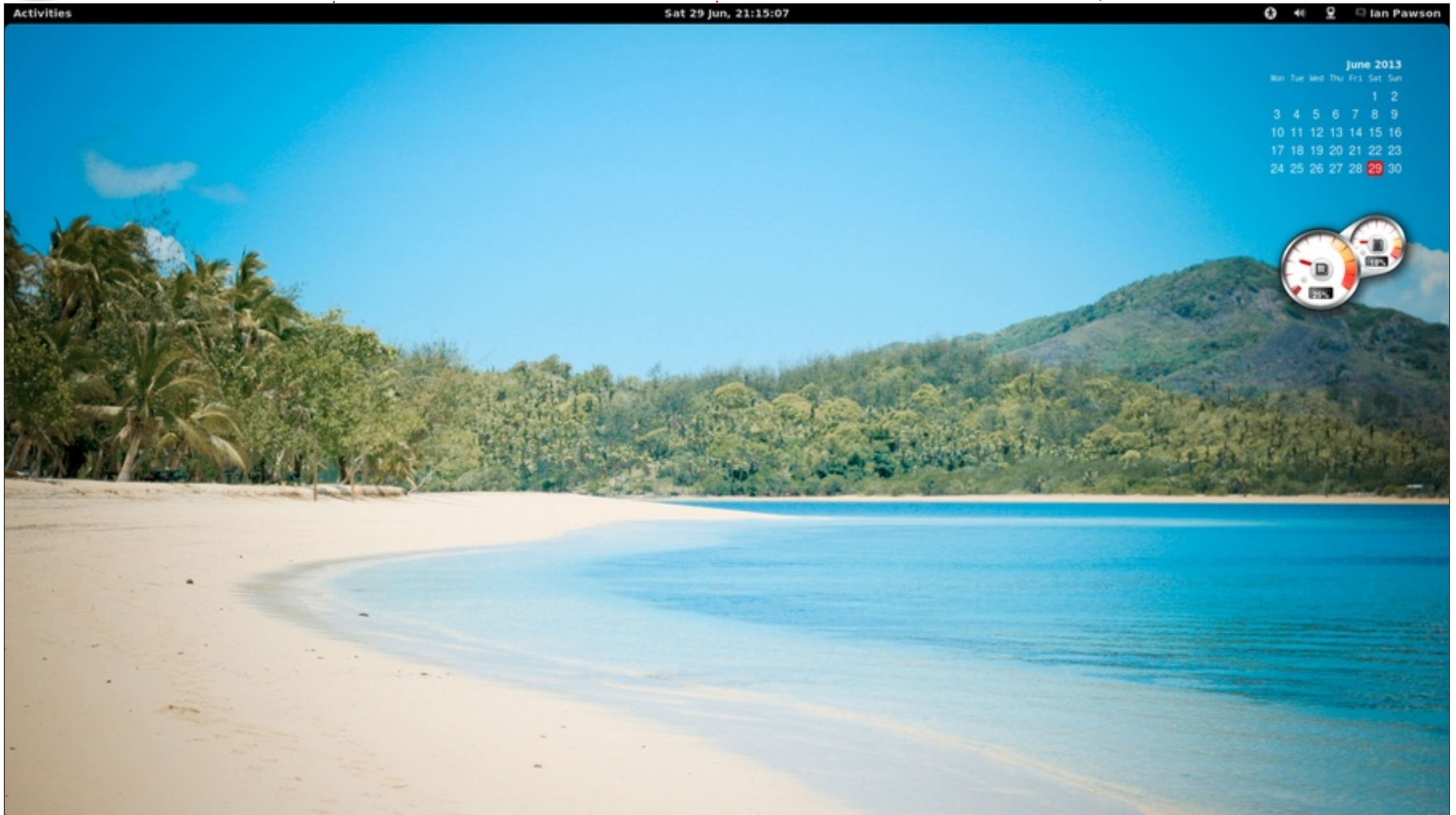






# MY DESKTOP

Your chance to show the world your desktop or PC. Email your screenshots and photos to: [misc@fullcirclemagazine.org](mailto:misc@fullcirclemagazine.org) and include a brief paragraph about your desktop, your PC's specs and any other interesting tidbits about your setup.



I use Mint 13 with the standard gnome 3 shell. The calendar and mem/cpu meter are screenlets.

I like the 'bare' look of the standard gnome. I hate icons or fancy menus on the desktop. Less is more.

From this you will gather that I absolutely hate the look of KDE!

**Ian Pawson**





## System specs:

CPU: AMD Phenom II X2 @ 3.1 GHz  
Memory: 4 GB  
Hard drive: 640 GB  
Graphics: Nvidia 9400 GT

OS: dual boot 64-bit Linux Mint 13 with Cinnamon, and Xubuntu 13.04 (plus Ubuntu 12.04 and Ubuntu 13.04 in Virtualbox, and Windows 8.1 Preview on a separate hard drive)

The background is a picture I took myself at Niagara Falls.

**Gord Campbell**





This desktop screenshot is from my home computer, running Ubuntu 10.04 on an Intel D945GCEP board with a Core 2 Duo 6320 proc at 1.86Ghz, onboard graphics card

and 2 GiB RAM. 3 internal HDD of sizes 320GB, 500GB and 750GB, all of them WD, and two external HDD each of them of 1TB, one Toshiba and the other Seagate. The modem is an Agere Systems Lucent V.92.

GNOME 2.30 Desktop Environment with some modifications.

I think my Desktop isn't pretty and is very unorganized, but it can show that in Linux you can do things your

way, no questions asked, regardless of the unholy mess you prefer.

**Aliet Expósito García**





## My Desktop:

Operating System: Ubuntu 13.04 64-bit

Desktop Environment: Unity

Gtk3 Theme: Mediterranean Light

## Darkest

Icon Set: Cornucopia (my own compiled icon set derived from FS Icon set)

## Hardware:

Motherboard: Gigabyte-H61M-S2P-B3

Processor: Intel Core i3-2100 CPU @ 3.10 GHz × 2

Graphics: Intel Sandybridge Desktop 4 GB RAM and 500 GB memory

**Rohan Pinto**



# HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

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